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REPRESENTATIVE SHORT STORIES

COLLECTED BY

NINA HART, A.M. (COLUMBIA)

AND

EDNA M. PERRY, A.M. (COLUMBIA)

INSTRUCTORS IN ENGLISH AT THE PACKER COLLEGIATE INSTITUTE, BROOKLYN, NEW YORK

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PREFACE

THE editors of this volume are fully aware of the many collections of short stories already in existence. Yet they have long felt the need of a collection which should present stories depicting the varying phases of American life, as well as a few foreign stories for purposes of comparison; and which should include not only narratives recognized as classics, but also the best type of stories from contemporary magazines. Only by the inclusion of such material as this do they consider it possible to arouse in the average student a dislike for exaggerative, badly constructed narratives and a corresponding appreciation for stories that are true miniatures of life.

For practical purposes these narratives have been grouped to illustrate recognized principles of short story writing.[1] Any detailed technical treatment of the short story has been avoided, for the editors do not wish to inhibit the student's spirit of individual investigation. Introductory and explanatory notes have been omitted for the same reason.

The stories for this collection have been chosen from more than two thousand. They have been tested in the classroom repeatedly and successfully, for the varied interests to which they appeal, for their technical value, and

[1] See Buck, Gertrude, and Morris, Elizabeth Woodbridge: *A Course in Narrative Writing.* Henry Holt and Company, N. Y. 1906.

for their power to stimulate thought. They should prove of permanent literary worth to the student and to the general reader.

A bibliography of writers on the short story has been added, and a list of good short stories has been suggested, in the hope that these may prove of adequate guidance to the general reader, in the further consideration of the short story.

The editors cannot fail to express their gratitude both to Miss Laura J. Wylie, head of the English Department, and to Miss Gertrude Buck, Professor of English at Vassar College, for their invaluable aid; to Miss Kate M. Ward, Director of the English Department of The Packer Collegiate Institute, for her encouragement and helpful criticism; and to those authors who have made this book possible. Due acknowledgment is made, also, to the publishing houses that have generously permitted the use of copyrighted material.

INTRODUCTION

Since the time of Poe and de Maupassant the short story has come more and more to be recognized as a distinct form of literature; to-day there exists a widespread interest in short narratives. Perhaps no other form of literature can better reflect our present, busy, urgent life, nor more vividly illumine its significant moments. The short story is no mere loosely woven tale, but a closely knit, finely finished narrative to be read at a single sitting; it is like a one act drama, with touches of description and exposition. This singleness of effect, this centering of our interest upon a single event, a single character, or a single scene, has been noted by Poe and later critics [1] as the distinguishing feature of the short story. In the true short story a single moment of life is seized upon and its full significance is swiftly revealed.

The short story may be discussed not only as a form of literature peculiarly adapted to reflect our modern life; it may also be studied from various other points of view: it may be viewed from an historical standpoint with an eye on its development from the early naïve tale; its effect on the emotions of the reader may be noted, and the

[1] Matthews, Brander: *The Philosophy of the Short Story.* Longmans, Green and Co., N. Y. 1901.

story may be characterized as comic, pathetic or tragic. Finally, the short story may be studied as an organic whole composed of certain well-defined interdependent elements — the setting, the characters, the plot, and the theme — from any of which may be derived the chief interest of the story.[1] It is from this point of view, with the structural elements in mind, that the short story is here discussed and the narratives in this volume are grouped.

A story may derive its chief interest from the setting which comprises three elements, the time, the place, and the atmosphere, all of which are inseparable from one another as well as from the characters and from the plot. Often the mere announcement of the time and the scene of an action suggests at least a general situation from which a plot may be logically developed; as, for instance, a Virginia plantation during the Civil War, or Paris in 1870. Often the particular scene is the real starting point of the story. Stevenson, himself, says of *Merry Men*, "There I began with a feeling of one of those islands of the West coast of Scotland, and I gradually developed the story to express the sentiment with which that coast affected me."[2]

Atmosphere permeates every detail of the narrative of an author, who, in Stevenson's phrase, has experienced "that indescribable bite of the whole thing at a man's heart which is — or rather lies — at the bottom of a story."[3] It emanates from every description, from the

[1] For other groupings of the short story, see Esenwein, J. Berg: *Writing the Short Story*. Hinds, Noble and Eldredge, N. Y. 1909.

[2] Balfour, Graham: *Life of Stevenson*. Charles Scribner's Sons, N.Y. 1901. 2 vols. Vol. II, p. 169.

[3] Stevenson, Robert Louis: *Valima Letters; Letters and Miscellanies of Robert Louis Stevenson*. Charles Scribner's Sons, N. Y. 1909. p. 238.

characters, from their very names, from all the action, and often from the title of the story.

In the opening paragraphs of *The Fall of the House of Usher*,[1] a scene of grim desolation is pictured in words fraught with gloom and dreariness. Only in such an atmosphere as this, "which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall and the silent tarn," could there exist the frantically morbid Roderick and his sister, the Lady Madeleine, sick with some strange malady. Only in such an atmosphere of decay and gloom, could there occur those terrible events which mark the fall of the House of Usher.

Again, the mention of Morris Mogilewsky [2] suggests the environment of the East Side, while the name of Harrison Randolph [3] brings to mind a picture of the aristocratic South. The difference in atmosphere is more distinctly felt when Morris says, "Teacher, yis ma'am, — I didn't to have no soap nor no perfumery, and my mama, she couldn't to buy none by the store; but, Teacher, I'm got something nice for you by present!" [2] — and when Harrison Randolph says, "Mr. Lee had chosen to doubt his word, which to a gentleman was the final insult." [3]

The atmosphere of a story is sometimes characterized as romantic or realistic, although it is difficult to draw the line of demarcation between these terms, for often in realistic stories appear romantic elements, and in romantic stories are frequently found realistic touches. Generally speaking, however, the atmosphere of a story in which life is pictured as we actually experience it in a city slum,

[1] Poe, Edgar Allan: *The Fall of the House of Usher*, p. 14.
[2] Kelly, Myra: *A Christmas Present for a Lady*, p. 198.
[3] Dunbar, Paul Laurence: *The Intervention of Peter*, p. 183.

in a mine, or in a manufacturing town, could be properly termed realistic; while that of a fairy story or a tale of adventure would tend toward the romantic. Yet whether the atmosphere be romantic or realistic, whether it be given through description or through dialect, it must always be "in its intention narrative"; it must always directly or indirectly further the action of the story.

Closely connected with environment and indispensable to the plot are the characters; in fact, the chief aim of many narratives is to reveal human nature. The means of characterization are many. An author may tell us directly what he thinks of a hero. Henry James, for instance, in picturing the character of the Prince, in *Miss Gunton of Poughkeepsie*,[1] says, "Tall, fair, active, educated, amiable, simple, carrying so naturally his great name and pronouncing so kindly Lily's small one, the happy youth, if he was one of the most ancient of princes, was one of the most modern of Romans."

More often an author portrays character indirectly; by means of description, through action, through a person's estimate of himself or through another's estimate of the character.

Surely the following description of Tennessee's Partner suggests not only his quaint awkwardness but also the underlying seriousness and silent, inherent dignity of a man who could be loyal unto death. "For he was not, certainly, an imposing figure. Short and stout, with a square face sunburned into a preternatural redness, clad in a loose duck 'jumper,' and trousers streaked and splashed with red soil, his aspect under any circumstances

[1] James, Henry: *Miss Gunton of Poughkeepsie*, p. 220.

would have been quaint, and was even now ridiculous. As he stooped to deposit at his feet a heavy carpet bag he was carrying, it became obvious, from partially developed legends and inscriptions, that the material with which his trousers had been patched had been originally intended for a less ambitious covering. Yet he advanced with great gravity, and after having shaken the hand of each person in the room with labored cordiality, he wiped his serious perplexed face on a red bandanna handkerchief, a shade lighter than his complexion, laid his powerful hand upon the table to steady himself and thus addressed the Judge: — " [1]

The loyalty and manly courage of Wee Willie Winkie [2] are impressed upon us in his every action before his rescue of Miss Allardyce, so that we are prepared for his final heroism.

It is chiefly through dialogue, through the conversation between the doctor's wife and Anna Mareea,[3] that we learn not only of the old woman's complete isolation from the world but also of her romantic longing to see what lies beyond the mountain, and her fear lest this ideal should never be realized.

And the troublesome meddling of a spoiled American child, in Miss Singmaster's story,[4] is humorously portrayed through the contrasting attitudes toward her of the scornful passengers and of her indulgent parents.

But no matter what method of portraiture is used, all character exposition must be "in its intention narrative,"

[1] Harte, Bret: *Tennessee's Partner*, p. 6.
[2] Kipling, Rudyard: *Wee Willie Winkie*, p. 201.
[3] Tiffany, Esther: *Anna Mareea*, p. 171.
[4] Singmaster, Elsie: *The Steamer Child*, p. 234.

must be closely related to plot development; for, as Mr. James says, "What is character but the determination of incident? What is incident but the illustration of character?" [1] The moment people exist, there begins a struggle of some kind, at times between themselves and their environment, often between themselves and others, or between two sides of their own nature.

The plot, then, from which is frequently derived the chief interest of the story, cannot exist without characters to take part in the struggle, and is often closely connected with the atmosphere. Of all the elements of a story, however, the plot is the most important; for it is the framework of the "conflict of forces," it is the very structure upon which the whole narrative is built. To work out the plot of a story is, then, to give in brief the main events that lead directly to the final outcome. For example, the plot of *Miss Youghal's Sais* [2] may be worked out as follows: Strickland, in the Indian Police, has fallen in love with Miss Youghal, whose parents oppose the match. Taking advantage of his past experience in masquerading as a native, Strickland disguises himself and becomes the "sais" or native Indian servant of the Youghals, being given for his especial work the care of Miss Youghal's horse. He manages to keep his disguise faithfully, enjoying the lady's society on certain rides, with no other person present, until, one day, when he hears an old general make love to Miss Youghal. Then Strickland, infuriated, bursts into a rage and challenges the general. Miss Youghal weeps. The general, beginning to under-

[1] James, Henry: *The Art of Fiction.* In *Specimens of Modern English Literary Criticism.* The Macmillan Company, N. Y. 1907.
[2] Kipling, Rudyard: *Miss Youghal's Sais*, p. 74.

stand the situation, luckily sees its humorous side, and breaks out into laughter. He decides to help the lovers, persuades the Youghals to let their daughter marry Strickland, and the story ends happily.

In order to understand what happens in the story, in order to comprehend the plot, there must usually be an explanation of what has taken place previously to the beginning of the main action; the situation must be made clear. This so-called "antecedent material" may be presented at the opening of the story, a method often followed by Mr. Kipling. For example, in the opening paragraphs of *Miss Youghal's Sais* [1] the reader is informed of Strickland's ability to disguise himself in native dress, of his love for Miss Youghal, of her parents' opposition to the match. Without such knowledge we could not understand the development of the story.

More often the curiosity of the reader is whetted by a bit of dialogue or by the account of an incident, at the beginning of a narrative. Under such circumstances, the "antecedent material" is introduced after the story has begun; the "explanatory prologue" is inverted. An excellent illustration of the "inverted prologue" occurs in *The Sire de Malétroit's Door*.[2] Not until some time after the unexpected welcome of Denis de Beaulieu by the venerable Sire de Malétroit do we fully understand the situation that makes the story possible — the discovery by her uncle of Blanche de Malétroit's attachment for a gallant young captain.

Again, bit by bit all through the narrative, more and more "antecedent material" may be suggested until not

[1] Kipling, Rudyard: *Miss Youghal's Sais*, p. 74.
[2] Stevenson, Robert Louis: *The Sire de Malétroit's Door*, p. 88 ff.

before the middle of the story, or, at times, toward the end, is the whole preliminary situation made clear. This last method of presenting "antecedent material" is subtle and difficult but exceedingly effective. In *The Man Who Was*,[1] for instance, we are by degrees made to understand what had previously happened to an officer of Her Majesty's White Hussars; little by little, to our horrified amazement, a tale of supreme suffering is unfolded which took place before the opening of the story; only toward the end of the narrative do we fully grasp the barbaric treatment of the former splendid soldier, that has turned him into an abject being, the wreck of "The Man Who Was."

Since every story centers around a conflict of forces, there must be one event to begin the struggle. In Stevenson's *Markheim*,[2] for instance, the murder of the antiquary begins the story. After this event the struggle goes on to the point where one force is seen to be the indisputable victor; where, in the story just cited, Markheim's better nature begins to triumph over his inborn capacity for evil. This event or turning point in the narrative is called the climax. In *The Sire de Malétroit's Door*,[3] the climax occurs where Blanche asks Denis to marry her, for after that point in the story, the reader feels assured of the hero's final victory. In *Tennessee's Partner* [4] the climax occurs where his "Partner" vainly attempts to save

[1] Kipling, Rudyard: *The Man Who Was*. In *A Collection of Short Stories*. Ed. by L. A. Pittenger. Pocket Classics Series. The Macmillan Company. 1913.

[2] Stevenson, Robert Louis: *Markheim*. In *A Collection of Short Stories*. Ed. by L. A. Pittenger. Pocket Classics Series. The Macmillan Company. 1913.

[3] Stevenson, Robert Louis: *The Sire de Malétroit's Door*, p. 100.

[4] Harte, Bret: *Tennessee's Partner*, p. 8.

Tennessee. Some critics term the culminating event, that point toward which every incident works, the climax of a narrative. The culminating point in *The Sire de Malétroit's Door* is Denis's declaration of love for Blanche de Malétroit. The culminating event in Bret Harte's story is the death of Tennessee's "Partner." Often in very short stories these two points, the turning and culminating points, coincide. Such is the case in *Our Lady's Juggler*,[1] where the juggler is discovered performing tricks before the Virgin to do her honor.

The end of the story, the final outcome of the struggle, for which the whole narrative had its being, is of vital importance. For whether or not a child has been recognized as a valorous man in the making, or a boy has been irrevocably perjured, never again can life be what it was before: a real change has been effected in the lives of the characters; something has happened; the reader has been led to see the immediate, or even the remote consequences of a deed, the real outcome, the full significance of the whole story.

Another element inseparable from the setting, the characters, and the plot is the theme of the story, the underlying thought, the central idea, which is an expression or intimation of the author's belief concerning some universal problem, or his point of view toward a particular type of character or toward a particular action. In his story, *The Birthmark*,[2] Hawthorne makes clear the tragic futility of any human endeavor to realize perfection. In

[1] France, Anatole: *Our Lady's Juggler*, pp. 66–67.

[2] Hawthorne, Nathaniel: *The Birthmark*. In *A Collection of Short Stories*. Ed. by L. A. Pittenger. Pocket Classics Series. The Macmillan Company. 1913.

the opening paragraphs of *The Man Who Was*,[1] Mr. Kipling unmistakably indicates the theme of his story, when he says, "Let it be clearly understood that the Russian is a delightful person till he tucks his shirt in." The particular narrative which follows is a forcible illustration of the idea, that the acquired charm of the Russian too often conceals a savage cruelty of nature.

Interest in the theme of a story may be quite subordinated to interest in character or in plot. In tales of mystery and adventure, like *The Gold Bug*,[2] or *The Sire de Malétroit's Door*,[3] the theme is incidental, is of such relative unimportance as to be for all practical purposes nonexistent; the reader of such tales cares only "to know how the story will turn out." In *Miss Gunton of Poughkeepsie*,[4] the alert reader may, after careful consideration, discover a central idea in the narrative, that it is impossible, in points of view, to reconcile Americans and foreigners; but he is more likely to ponder over the contrasting qualities of Lily and the Prince.

In other stories, however, where the theme is of distinct importance, interest in it, in the characters and in the plot may be equally maintained throughout the narrative. We follow intently the events subsequent to Master Hauchecorne's trivial act,[5] the picking up of a little piece of string, keenly alive to the old man's simplicity and

[1] Kipling, Rudyard: *The Man Who Was.* In *A Collection of Short Stories.* Ed. by L. A. Pittenger. Pocket Classics Series. The Macmillan Company. 1913.

[2] Poe, Edgar Allan: *The Gold Bug.* In *A Collection of Short Stories.* Ed. by L. A. Pittenger. Pocket Classics Series. The Macmillan Company. 1913.

[3] Stevenson, Robert Louis: *The Sire de Malétroit's Door*, p. 81.

[4] James, Henry: *Miss Gunton of Poughkeepsie*, p. 215.

[5] de Maupassant, Guy: *The Piece of String.*

helplessness. His pitiful end so deeply impresses us that we cannot fail to see the central idea of the story, the importance of a trifle in shaping a man's destiny.

The theme is indeed often so vital as to suggest the point of departure for a story. The thought that family traditions may rise and fall probably suggested to Selma Lagerlöf the point of departure for her story of *Uncle Reuben*.[1] In certain narratives which derive their chief interest from the theme, it is often explicitly stated at the beginning or at the end of a story. The custom of thus making the main idea obvious is frequently followed by Mr. Kipling. In other stories, especially in the more recent narratives, the underlying thought is often implied, is merely suggested. Some critics believe this method to be more artistic, and more effective in its subtle challenge to the intellect: the more imaginative reader is pleasurably thrilled with a sense of his own power when he discovers for himself the implied theme of a story. *The Best Bait for Mosquitos*[2] would, perhaps, lose much of its force, were we directly told at the end of the story, Mr. Canby's central idea, that a practical knowledge of the game, as well as mere theorizing, is needed for success in fishing and in politics.

There is yet another type of story where the theme is of such supreme importance, that interest in it quite overshadows interest in the characters or in the plot. A failure to grasp "the underlying meaning" of such a narrative results in a failure to understand the story itself; the narrative is wholly without meaning when the reader cannot comprehend the idea which the characters through

[1] Lagerlöf, Selma: *Uncle Reuben*, p. 247.
[2] Canby, Henry Seidel: *The Best Bait for Mosquitos*, p. 286.

their actions symbolize. It is difficult for young students to appreciate stories of this kind. The philosophy in them at times transcends the experience of youth; and the narrative may seem so strange that not even interest in the action is aroused. For instance, the average student is mystified by *The Minister's Black Veil*.[1] Only the more imaginative reader may discover at the end of the narrative the underlying meaning of the whole story, that the black veil of the minister symbolizes a mask of unrevealing expression which men assume to hide their thoughts and feelings. Many of Hawthorne's stories belong to this class, of what might be termed symbolic narratives.

Since many stories are but the concrete working out of a general thought, it follows that different narratives may center around the same general idea, while in the stories of one author may be found great diversity of theme. Although written from strikingly different points of view, *Tennessee's Partner*[2] and *The Intervention of Peter*[3] are variations on the same theme, the unwavering, touching allegiance of the hero to another character in the story. Again, while differing widely in plot and in the types of character presented, both *The Lantern*[4] and *The Luck of Roaring Camp*[5] center around the same general idea, the unexpected redeeming virtue of an otherwise unprincipled character. A single volume of narratives by one author may readily disclose great variety in "underlying thought." Such variety is revealed, for instance, in *Plain*

[1] Hawthorne, Nathaniel: *The Minister's Black Veil.*
[2] Harte, Bret: *Tennessee's Partner*, p. 1.
[3] Dunbar, Paul Laurence: *The Intervention of Peter*, p. 182.
[4] Brown, Alice: *The Lantern*, p. 150.
[5] Harte, Bret: *The Luck of Roaring Camp.*

Tales from the Hills, where Mr. Kipling develops themes as different as the following: the loyalty unto death of an ugly, fearless woman [1]; the tragic results of rearing a boy under the 'sheltered life system' [2]; the depths of unselfish devotion to which a gay nature may be moved through pity.[3] In every case, however, certain themes have proved of universal interest to author and to public, such as the importance of trifles [4]; the unexpected gentleness of rough characters [5]; the unswerving loyalty of one person to another.[6]

These four elements, then, the setting, the characters, the plot and the theme, closely woven together, go to make up the structural whole of the story. Yet they all are "in intention narrative," since they directly or indirectly further the action.

But whether or not the chief interest in a narrative be derived from all or from any one of these sources, there is almost universal agreement upon the chief requisites of a story. A narrative is of real literary worth when the characters are natural and individual, when the plot is unified, consistent, and inevitable, when the point of view is such as to give the reader a truer vision of life. The short story is a cross-section of life, so clearly seen and understood in all of its implications as to afford the reader a sound basis for future judgment of character and for future methods of action.

[1] Kipling, Rudyard: *The Daughter of the Regiment.* In *Plain Tales from the Hills.* Doubleday, Page and Company, N. Y. 1899.

[2] Kipling, Rudyard: *Thrown Away.* In *Plain Tales from the Hills.* Doubleday, Page and Company, N. Y. 1899.

[3] Kipling, Rudyard: *A Bank Fraud.* In *Plain Tales from the Hills.* Doubleday, Page and Company, N. Y. 1899.

[4] de Maupassant, Guy: *The Piece of String.*

[5] Harte, Bret: *The Luck of Roaring Camp.*

[6] Dunbar, Paul Laurence: *The Intervention of Peter*, p. 182.

REPRESENTATIVE SHORT STORIES

TENNESSEE'S PARTNER[1]

By Bret Harte

I do not think that we ever knew his real name. Our ignorance of it certainly never gave us any social inconvenience, for at Sandy Bar in 1854 most men were christened anew. Sometimes these appellatives were derived from some distinctiveness of dress, as in the case of "Dungaree Jack"; or from some peculiarity of habit, as shown in "Saleratus Bill," so called from an undue proportion of that chemical in his daily bread; or from some unlucky slip, as exhibited in "The Iron Pirate," a mild, inoffensive man, who earned that baleful title by his unfortunate mispronunciation of the term "iron pyrites." Perhaps this may have been the beginning of a rude heraldry; but I am constrained to think that it was because a man's real name in that day rested solely upon his own unsupported statement. "Call yourself Clifford, do you?" said Boston, addressing a timid newcomer with infinite scorn; "hell is full of such Cliffords!" He then introduced the unfortunate man, whose name happened to be really Clifford, as "Jay-bird Charley," — an unhallowed inspiration of the moment, that clung to him ever after.

[1] Reprinted with the permission of The Houghton Mifflin Company.

But to return to Tennessee's Partner, whom we never knew by any other than this relative title; that he had ever existed as a separate and distinct individuality we only learned later. It seems that in 1853 he left Poker Flat to go to San Francisco, ostensibly to procure a wife. He never got any farther than Stockton. At that place he was attracted by a young person who waited upon the table at the hotel where he took his meals. One morning he said something to her which caused her to smile not unkindly, to somewhat coquettishly break a plate of toast over his upturned, serious, simple face, and to retreat to the kitchen. He followed her, and emerged a few moments later, covered with more toast and victory. That day week they were married by a Justice of the Peace, and returned to Poker Flat. I am aware that something more might be made of this episode, but I prefer to tell it as it was current at Sandy Bar, — in the gulches and barrooms, — where all sentiment was modified by a strong sense of humor.

Of their married felicity but little is known, perhaps for the reason that Tennessee, then living with his partner, one day took occasion to say something to the bride on his own account, at which, it is said, she smiled not unkindly and chastely retreated, — this time as far as Marysville, where Tennessee followed her, and where they went to housekeeping without the aid of a Justice of the Peace. Tennessee's Partner took the loss of his wife simply and seriously, as was his fashion. But to everybody's surprise, when Tennessee one day returned from Marysville, without his partner's wife, — she having smiled and retreated with somebody else, — Tennessee's Partner was the first man to shake his hand and greet him

with affection. The boys who had gathered in the cañon to see the shooting were naturally indignant. Their indignation might have found vent in sarcasm but for a certain look in Tennessee's Partner's eye that indicated a lack of humorous appreciation. In fact, he was a grave man, with a steady application to practical detail which was unpleasant in a difficulty.

Meanwhile a popular feeling against Tennessee had grown up on the Bar. He was known to be a gambler: he was suspected to be a thief. In these suspicions Tennessee's Partner was equally compromised; his continued intimacy with Tennessee after the affair above quoted could only be accounted for on the hypothesis of a copartnership of crime. At last Tennessee's guilt became flagrant. One day he overtook a stranger on his way to Red Dog. The stranger afterward related that Tennessee beguiled the time with interesting anecdote and reminiscence, but illogically concluded the interview in the following words: "And now, young man, I'll trouble you for your knife, your pistols, and your money. You see your weppings might get you into trouble at Red Dog, and your money's a temptation to the evilly disposed. I think you said your address was San Francisco. I shall endeavor to call." It may be stated here that Tennessee had a fine flow of humor, which no business preoccupation could wholly subdue.

This exploit was his last. Red Dog and Sandy Bar made common cause against the highwayman. Tennessee was hunted in very much the same fashion as his prototype, the grizzly. As the toils closed around him, he made a desperate dash through the Bar, emptying his revolver at the crowd before the Arcade Saloon, and so

on up Grizzly Cañon; but at its farther extremity he was stopped by a small man on a gray horse. The men looked at each other a moment in silence. Both were fearless, both self-possessed and independent; and both types of a civilization that in the seventeenth century would have been called heroic, but, in the nineteenth, simply "reckless." "What have you got there? — I call," said Tennessee, quietly. "Two bowers and an ace," said the stranger, as quietly, showing two revolvers and a bowie knife. "That takes me," returned Tennessee; and with this gamblers' epigram, he threw away his useless pistol, and rode back with his captor.

It was a warm night. The cool breeze which usually sprang up with the going down of the sun behind the *chaparral*-crested mountain was that evening withheld from Sandy Bar. The little cañon was stifling with heated resinous odors, and the decaying driftwood on the Bar sent forth faint, sickening exhalations. The feverishness of day, and its fierce passions, still filled the camp. Lights moved restlessly along the bank of the river, striking no answering reflection from its tawny current. Against the blackness of the pines the windows of the old loft above the express office stood out staringly bright; and through their curtainless panes the loungers below could see the forms of those who were even then deciding the fate of Tennessee. And above all this, etched on the dark firmament, rose the Sierra, remote and passionless, crowned with remoter passionless stars.

The trial of Tennessee was conducted as fairly as was consistent with a judge and jury who felt themselves to some extent obliged to justify, in their verdict, the previous irregularities of arrest and indictment. The law of Sandy

Bar was implacable, but not vengeful. The excitement and personal feeling of the chase were over; with Tennessee safe in their hands they were ready to listen patiently to any defense, which they were already satisfied was insufficient. There being no doubt in their own minds, they were willing to give the prisoner the benefit of any that might exist. Secure in the hypothesis that he ought to be hanged, on general principles, they indulged him with more latitude of defense than his reckless hardihood seemed to ask. The Judge appeared to be more anxious than the prisoner, who, otherwise unconcerned, evidently took a grim pleasure in the responsibility he had created. "I don't take any hand in this yer game," had been his invariable, but good-humored reply to all questions. The Judge — who was also his captor — for a moment vaguely regretted that he had not shot him "on sight," that morning, but presently dismissed this human weakness as unworthy of the judicial mind. Nevertheless, when there was a tap at the door, and it was said that Tennessee's Partner was there on behalf of the prisoner, he was admitted at once without question. Perhaps the younger members of the jury, to whom the proceedings were becoming irksomely thoughtful, hailed him as a relief.

For he was not, certainly, an imposing figure. Short and stout, with a square face, sunburned into a preternatural redness, clad in a loose duck "jumper," and trousers streaked and splashed with red soil, his aspect under any circumstances would have been quaint, and was now even ridiculous. As he stooped to deposit at his feet a heavy carpetbag he was carrying, it became obvious, from partially developed legends and inscriptions, that the

material with which his trousers had been patched had been originally intended for a less ambitious covering. Yet he advanced with great gravity, and after having shaken the hand of each person in the room with labored cordiality, he wiped his serious, perplexed face on a red bandanna handkerchief, a shade lighter than his complexion, laid his powerful hand upon the table to steady himself, and thus addressed the Judge: —

"I was passin' by," he began, by way of apology, "and I thought I'd just step in and see how things was gittin' on with Tennessee thar, — my pardner. It's a hot night. I disremember any sich weather before on the Bar."

He paused a moment, but nobody volunteering any other meteorological recollection, he again had recourse to his pocket handkerchief, and for some moments mopped his face diligently.

"Have you anything to say in behalf of the prisoner?" said the Judge, finally.

"Thet's it," said Tennessee's Partner, in a tone of relief. "I come yar as Tennessee's pardner, — knowing him nigh on four year, off and on, wet and dry, in luck and out o' luck. His ways ain't allers my ways, but thar ain't any p'ints in that young man, thar ain't any liveliness as he's been up to, as I don't know. And you sez to me, sez you, — confidential-like, and between man and man, — sez you, 'Do you know anything in his behalf?' and I sez to you, sez I, — confidential-like, as between man and man, — 'What should a man know of his pardner?'"

"Is this all you have to say?" asked the Judge, impatiently, feeling, perhaps, that a dangerous sympathy of humor was beginning to humanize the Court.

"Thet's so," continued Tennessee's Partner. "It ain't for me to say anything agin' him. And now, what's the case? Here's Tennessee wants money, wants it bad, and doesn't like to ask it of his old pardner. Well, what does Tennessee do? He lays for a stranger, and he fetches that stranger. And you lays for *him*, and you fetches *him;* and the honors is easy. And I put it to you, bein' a fa'r-minded man, and to you, gentlemen, all, as fa'r-minded men, ef this isn't so?"

"Prisoner," said the Judge, interrupting, "have you any questions to ask this man?"

"No! no!" continued Tennessee's Partner, hastily. "I play this yer hand alone. To come down to the bed rock, it's just this: Tennessee, thar, has played it pretty rough and expensive-like on a stranger, and on this yer camp. And now, what's the fair thing? Some would say more; some would say less. Here's seventeen hundred dollars in coarse gold and a watch, it's about all my pile, — and call it square!" And before a hand could be raised to prevent him, he had emptied the contents of the carpet-bag upon the table.

For a moment his life was in jeopardy. One or two men sprang to their feet, several hands groped for hidden weapons, and a suggestion to "throw him from the window" was only overridden by a gesture from the Judge. Tennessee laughed. And apparently oblivious of the excitement, Tennessee's Partner improved the opportunity to mop his face again with his handkerchief.

When order was restored, and the man was made to understand, by the use of forcible figures and rhetoric, that Tennessee's offense could not be condoned by money, his face took a more serious and sanguinary hue, and those

who were nearest to him noticed that his rough hand trembled slightly on the table. He hesitated a moment as he slowly returned the gold to the carpet-bag, as if he had not yet entirely caught the elevated sense of justice which swayed the tribunal, and was perplexed with the belief that he had not offered enough. Then he turned to the Judge, and saying, "This yer is a lone hand, played alone, and without my pardner," he bowed to the jury and was about to withdraw, when the Judge called him back. "If you have anything to say to Tennessee, you had better say it now." For the first time that evening the eyes of the prisoner and his strange advocate met. Tennessee smiled, showed his white teeth, and, saying, "Euchred, old man!" held out his hand. Tennessee's Partner took it in his own, and saying, "I just dropped in as I was passin' to see how things was gettin' on," let the hand passively fall, and adding that "it was a warm night," again mopped his face with his handkerchief, and without another word withdrew.

The two men never again met each other alive. For the unparalleled insult of a bribe offered to Judge Lynch—who, whether bigoted, weak, or narrow, was at least incorruptible—firmly fixed in the mind of that mythical personage any wavering determination of Tennessee's fate; and at the break of day he was marched, closely guarded, to meet it at the top of Marley's Hill.

How he met it, how cool he was, how he refused to say anything, how perfect were the arrangements of the committee, were all duly reported, with the addition of a warning moral and example to all future evil doers, in the Red Dog *Clarion*, by its editor, who was present, and to whose vigorous English I cheerfully refer the reader.

But the beauty of that midsummer morning, the blessed amity of earth and air and sky, the awakened life of the free woods and hills, the joyous renewal and promise of Nature, and above all, the infinite serenity that thrilled through each, was not reported, as not being a part of the social lesson. And yet, when the weak and foolish deed was done, and a life, with its possibilities and responsibilities, had passed out of the misshapen thing that dangled between earth and sky, the birds sang, the flowers bloomed, the sun shone, as cheerily as before; and possibly the Red Dog *Clarion* was right.

Tennessee's Partner was not in the group that surrounded the ominous tree. But as they turned to disperse, attention was drawn to the singular appearance of a motionless donkey cart halted at the side of the road. As they approached, they at once recognized the venerable "Jenny" and the two-wheeled cart as the property of Tennessee's Partner, — used by him in carrying dirt from his claim; and a few paces distant the owner of the equipage himself, sitting under a buckeye tree, wiping the perspiration from his glowing face. In answer to an inquiry, he said he had come for the body of the "diseased," "if it was all the same to the committee." He didn't wish to "hurry anything"; he could "wait." He was not working that day; and when the gentlemen were done with the "diseased," he would take him. "Ef thar is any present," he added, in his simple, serious way, "as would care to jine in the fun'l, they kin come." Perhaps it was from a sense of humor, which I have already intimated was a feature of Sandy Bar, — perhaps it was from something even better than that; but two thirds of the loungers accepted the invitation at once.

It was noon when the body of Tennessee was delivered into the hands of his partner. As the cart drew up to the fatal tree, we noticed that it contained a rough, oblong box, — apparently made from a section of sluicing, — and half filled with bark and the tassels of pine. The cart was further decorated with slips of willow, and made fragrant with buckeye blossoms. When the body was deposited in the box, Tennessee's Partner drew over it a piece of tarred canvas, and gravely mounting the narrow seat in front, with his feet upon the shafts, urged the little donkey forward. The equipage moved slowly on, at that decorous pace which was habitual with "Jenny" even under less solemn circumstances. The men — half curiously, half jestingly, but all good-humoredly — strolled along beside the cart; some in advance, some a little in the rear of the homely catafalque. But, whether from the narrowing of the road or some present sense of decorum, as the cart passed on, the company fell to the rear in couples, keeping step, and otherwise assuming the external show of a formal procession. Jack Folinsbee, who had at the outset played a funeral march in dumb show upon an imaginary trombone, desisted, from a lack of sympathy and appreciation, — not having, perhaps, your true humorist's capacity to be content with the enjoyment of his own fun.

The way led through Grizzly Cañon, — by this time clothed in funereal drapery and shadows. The redwoods, burying their moccasined feet in the red soil, stood in Indian file along the track, trailing an uncouth benediction from their bending boughs upon the passing bier. A hare, surprised into helpless inactivity, sat upright and pulsating in the ferns by the roadside, as the *cortège* went

by. Squirrels hastened to gain a secure outlook from higher boughs; and the blue jays, spreading their wings, fluttered before them like outriders, until the outskirts of Sandy Bar were reached, and the solitary cabin of Tennessee's Partner.

Viewed under more favorable circumstances, it would not have been a cheerful place. The unpicturesque site, the rude and unlovely outlines, the unsavory details, which distinguish the nest-building of the California miner, were all here, with the dreariness of decay superadded. A few paces from the cabin there was a rough inclosure, which, in the brief days of Tennessee's Partner's matrimonial felicity, had been used as a garden, but was now overgrown with fern. As we approached it we were surprised to find that what we had taken for a recent attempt at cultivation was the broken soil about an open grave.

The cart was halted before the inclosure; and rejecting the offers of assistance with the same air of simple self-reliance he had displayed throughout, Tennessee's Partner lifted the rough coffin on his back, and deposited it, unaided, within the shallow grave. He then nailed down the board which served as a lid; and mounting the little mound of earth beside it, took off his hat, and slowly mopped his face with his handkerchief. This the crowd felt was a preliminary to speech; and they disposed themselves variously on stumps and bowlders, and sat expectant.

"When a man," began Tennessee's Partner, slowly, "has been running free all day, what's the natural thing for him to do? Why, to come home. And if he ain't in a condition to go home, what can his best friend do? Why, bring him home! And here's Tennessee has been

running free, and we brings him home from his wandering." He paused, and picked up a fragment of quartz, rubbed it thoughtfully on his sleeve, and went on: "It ain't the first time that I've packed him on my back, as you see'd me now. It ain't the first time that I brought him to this yer cabin when he couldn't help himself; it ain't the first time that I and 'Jinny' have waited for him on yon hill, and picked him up and so fetched him home, when he couldn't speak, and didn't know me. And now that it's the last time, why, —" he paused, and rubbed the quartz gently on his sleeve, — "you see it's sort of rough on his pardner. And now, gentlemen," he added, abruptly, picking up his long-handled shovel, "the fun'l's over; and my thanks, and Tennessee's thanks, to you for your trouble."

Resisting any proffers of assistance, he began to fill in the grave, turning his back upon the crowd, that after a few moments' hesitation gradually withdrew. As they crossed the little ridge that hid Sandy Bar from view, some, looking back, thought they could see Tennessee's Partner, his work done, sitting upon the grave, his shovel between his knees, and his face buried in his red bandanna handkerchief. But it was argued by others that you couldn't tell his face from his handkerchief at that distance; and this point remained undecided.

In the reaction that followed the feverish excitement of that day, Tennessee's Partner was not forgotten. A secret investigation had cleared him of any complicity in Tennessee's guilt, and left only a suspicion of his general sanity. Sandy Bar made a point of calling on him and proffering various uncouth, but well-meant kindnesses. But from that day his rude health and great strength

seemed visibly to decline; and when the rainy season fairly set in, and the tiny grass-blades were beginning to peep from the rocky mound above Tennessee's grave, he took to his bed.

One night, when the pines beside the cabin were swaying in the storm, and trailing their slender fingers over the roof, and the roar and rush of the swollen river were heard below, Tennessee's Partner lifted his head from the pillow, saying, "It is time to go for Tennessee; I must put 'Jinny' in the cart"; and would have risen from his bed but for the restraint of his attendant. Struggling, he still pursued his singular fancy: "There, now, steady, 'Jinny,' — steady, old girl. How dark it is! Look out for the ruts, — and look out for him, too, old gal. Sometimes, you know, when he's blind drunk, he drops down right in the trail. Keep on straight up to the pine on the top of the hill. Thar — I told you so! — thar he is, — coming this way, too, — all by himself, sober, and his face a-shining. Tennessee! Pardner!"

And so they met.

THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF USHER

By Edgar Allan Poe

Son cœur est un luth suspendu;
Sitôt qu'on le touche il résonne.

— De Béranger.

During the whole of a dull, dark, and soundless day in the autumn of the year, when the clouds hung oppressively low in the heavens, I had been passing alone, on horseback, through a singularly dreary tract of country; and at length found myself, as the shades of the evening drew on, within view of the melancholy House of Usher. I know not how it was; but, with the first glimpse of the building, a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit. I say insufferable; for the feeling was unrelieved by any of that half-pleasurable, because poetic, sentiment, with which the mind usually receives even the sternest natural images of the desolate or terrible. I looked upon the scene before me — upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain — upon the bleak walls — upon the vacant eye-like windows — upon a few rank sedges — and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees — with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveler upon opium — the bitter lapse into every-day life — the hideous dropping off of the veil. There was an

iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart — an unredeemed dreariness of thought which no goading of the imagination could torture into aught of the sublime. What was it — I paused to think — what was it that so unnerved me in the contemplation of the House of Usher? It was a mystery all insoluble; nor could I grapple with the shadowy fancies that crowded upon me as I pondered. I was forced to fall back upon the unsatisfactory conclusion that while, beyond doubt, there *are* combinations of very simple natural objects which have the power of thus affecting us, still the analysis of this power lies among considerations beyond our depth. It was possible, I reflected, that a mere different arrangement of the particulars of the scene, of the details of the picture, would be sufficient to modify, or perhaps to annihilate its capacity for sorrowful impressions; and, acting upon this idea, I reined my horse to the precipitous brink of a black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled luster by the dwelling, and gazed down — but with a shudder even more thrilling than before — upon the remodeled and inverted images of the gray sedge, and the ghastly tree stems, and the vacant and eye-like windows.

Nevertheless, in this mansion of gloom I now proposed to myself a sojourn of some weeks. Its proprietor, Roderick Usher, had been one of my boon companions in boyhood; but many years had elapsed since our last meeting. A letter, however, had lately reached me in a distant part of the country — a letter from him — which, in its wildly importunate nature, had admitted of no other than a personal reply. The MS. gave evidence of nervous agitation. The writer spoke of acute bodily illness, of a mental disorder which oppressed him, and of an earnest

desire to see me, as his best, and indeed his only persona friend, with a view of attempting, by the cheerfulness o my society, some alleviation of his malady. It was th manner in which all this, and much more, was said — it wa the apparent *heart* that went with his request — whic allowed me no room for hesitation; and I accordingly obeyed forthwith what I still considered a very singula summons.

Although, as boys, we had been even intimate associates yet I really knew little of my friend. His reserve had been always excessive and habitual. I was aware, however, that his very ancient family had been noted, time out of mind, for a peculiar sensibility of temperament, displaying itself, through long ages in many works of exalted art, and manifested, of late, in repeated deeds of munificent, yet unobtrusive charity, as well as in a passionate devotion to the intricacies, perhaps even more than to the orthodox and easily recognizable beauties, of musical science. I had learned, too, the very remarkable fact that the stem of the Usher race, all time-honored as it was, had put forth, at no period, any enduring branch; in other words, that the entire family lay in the direct line of descent, and had always, with very trifling and very temporary variation, so lain. It was this deficiency, I considered, while running over in thought the perfect keeping of the character of the premises with the accredited character of the people, and while speculating upon the possible influence which the one, in the long lapse of centuries, might have exercised upon the other — it was this deficiency, perhaps, of collateral issue, and the consequent undeviating transmission, from sire to son, of the patrimony with the name, which had, at length, so identi-

fied the two as to merge the original title of the estate in the quaint and equivocal appellation of the "House of Usher" — an appellation which seemed to include, in the minds of the peasantry who used it, both the family and the family mansion.

I have said that the sole effect of my somewhat childish experiment of looking down within the tarn had been to deepen the first singular impression. There can be no doubt that the consciousness of the rapid increase of my superstition — for why should I not so term it? — served mainly to accelerate the increase itself. Such, I have long known, is the paradoxical law of all sentiments having terror as a basis. And it might have been for this reason only, that, when I again uplifted my eyes to the house itself, from its image in the pool, there grew in my mind a strange fancy — a fancy so ridiculous, indeed, that I but mention it to show the vivid force of the sensations which oppressed me. I had so worked upon my imagination as really to believe that about the whole mansion and domain there hung an atmosphere peculiar to themselves and their immediate vicinity — an atmosphere which had no affinity with the air of heaven, but which had reeked up from the decayed trees, and the gray wall, and the silent tarn — a pestilent and mystic vapor, dull, sluggish, faintly discernible, and leaden-hued.

Shaking off from my spirit what *must* have been a dream, I scanned more narrowly the real aspect of the building. Its principal feature seemed to be that of an excessive antiquity. The discoloration of ages had been great. Minute fungi overspread the whole exterior, hanging in a fine, tangled web-work from the eaves. Yet all this was apart from any extraordinary dilapidation. No portion

of the masonry had fallen; and there appeared to be a wild inconsistency between its still perfect adaptation of parts, and the crumbling condition of the individual stones. In this there was much that reminded me of the specious totality of old woodwork which has rotted for years in some neglected vault, with no disturbance from the breath of the external air. Beyond this indication of extensive decay, however, the fabric gave little token of instability. Perhaps the eye of a scrutinizing observer might have discovered a barely perceptible fissure, which, extending from the roof of the building in front, made its way down the wall in a zigzag direction, until it became lost in the sullen waters of the tarn.

Noticing these things, I rode over a short causeway to the house. A servant in waiting took my horse, and I entered the Gothic archway of the hall. A valet, of stealthy step, thence conducted me, in silence, through many dark and intricate passages in my progress to the *studio* of his master. Much that I encountered on the way contributed, I know not how, to heighten the vague sentiments of which I have already spoken. While the objects around me — while the carvings of the ceilings, the sombre tapestries of the walls, the ebon blackness of the floors, and the phantasmagoric armorial trophies which rattled as I strode, were but matters to which, or to such as which, I had been accustomed from my infancy — while I hesitated not to acknowledge how familiar was all this — I still wondered to find how unfamiliar were the fancies which ordinary images were stirring up. On one of the stair-cases I met the physician of the family. His countenance, I thought, wore a mingled expression of low cunning and perplexity. He accosted me with trepidation and passed

on. The valet now threw open a door and ushered me into the presence of his master.

The room in which I found myself was very large and lofty. The windows were long, narrow, and pointed, and at so vast a distance from the black oaken floor as to be altogether inaccessible from within. Feeble gleams of encrimsoned light made their way through the trellised panes, and served to render sufficiently distinct the more prominent objects around; the eye, however, struggled in vain to reach the remoter angles of the chamber, or the recesses of the vaulted and fretted ceiling. Dark draperies hung upon the walls. The general furniture was profuse, comfortless, antique, and tattered. Many books and musical instruments lay scattered about, but failed to give any vitality to the scene. I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. An air of stern, deep, and irredeemable gloom hung over and pervaded all.

Upon my entrance, Usher arose from a sofa on which he had been lying at full length, and greeted me with a vivacious warmth which had much in it, I at first thought, of an overdone cordiality — of the constrained effort of the *ennuyé* man of the world. A glance, however, at his countenance convinced me of his perfect sincerity. We sat down; and for some moments, while he spoke not, I gazed upon him with a feeling half of pity, half of awe. Surely, man had never before so terribly altered, in so brief a period, as had Roderick Usher! It was with difficulty that I could bring myself to admit the identity of the wan being before me with the companion of my early boyhood. Yet the character of his face had been at all times remarkable. A cadaverousness of complexion; an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison; lips

somewhat thin and very pallid, but of a surprisingly beautiful curve; a nose of a delicate Hebrew model, but with a breadth of nostril unusual in similar formations; a finely molded chin, speaking, in its want of prominence, of a want of moral energy; hair of a more than web-like softness and tenuity; these features, with an inordinate expansion above the regions of the temple, made up altogether a countenance not easily to be forgotten. And now in the mere exaggeration of the prevailing character of these features, and of the expression they were wont to convey, lay so much of change that I doubted to whom I spoke. The now ghastly pallor of the skin, and the now miraculous luster of the eye, above all things startled and even awed me. The silken hair, too, had been suffered to grow all unheeded, and as, in its wild gossamer texture, it floated rather than fell about the face, I could not, even with effort, connect its arabesque expression with any idea of simple humanity.

In the manner of my friend I was at once struck with an incoherence — an inconsistency; and I soon found this to arise from a series of feeble and futile struggles to overcome an habitual trepidancy, an excessive nervous agitation. For something of this nature I had indeed been prepared, no less by his letter than by reminiscences of certain boyish traits, and by conclusions deduced from his peculiar physical conformation and temperament. His action was alternately vivacious and sullen. His voice varied rapidly from a tremulous indecision (when the animal spirits seemed utterly in abeyance) to that species of energetic concision — that abrupt, weighty, unhurried, and hollow-sounding enunciation — that leaden, self-balanced, and perfectly modulated guttural utterance, which may be

observed in the lost drunkard, or the irreclaimable eater of opium, during the periods of his most intense excitement.

It was thus that he spoke of the object of my visit, of his earnest desire to see me, and of the solace he expected me to afford him. He entered, at some length, into what he conceived to be the nature of his malady. It was, he said, a constitutional and a family evil, and one for which he despaired to find a remedy — a mere nervous affection, he immediately added, which would undoubtedly soon pass off. It displayed itself in a host of unnatural sensations. Some of these, as he detailed them, interested and bewildered me; although, perhaps, the terms and the general manner of the narration had their weight. He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses. The most insipid food was alone endurable; he could wear only garments of certain texture; the odors of all flowers were oppressive; his eyes were tortured by even a faint light; and there were but peculiar sounds, and these from stringed instruments, which did not inspire him with horror.

To an anomalous species of terror I found him a bounden slave. "I shall perish," said he, "I *must* perish in this deplorable folly. Thus, thus, and not otherwise, shall I be lost. I dread the events of the future, not in themselves, but in their results. I shudder at the thought of any, even the most trivial, incident, which may operate upon this intolerable agitation of soul. I have, indeed, no abhorrence of danger, except in its absolute effect — in terror. In this unnerved — in this pitiable condition — I feel that the period will sooner or later arrive when I must abandon life and reason together, in some struggle with the grim phantasm, FEAR."

I learned, moreover, at intervals, and through broken

and equivocal hints, another singular feature of his mental condition. He was enchained by certain superstitious impressions in regard to the dwelling which he tenanted, and whence, for many years, he had never ventured forth — in regard to an influence whose supposititious force was conveyed in terms too shadowy here to be restated — an influence which some peculiarities in the mere form and substance of his family mansion, had, by dint of long sufferance, he said, obtained over his spirit — an effect which the *physique* of the gray walls and turrets, and of the dim tarn into which they all looked down, had, at length, brought about upon the *morale* of his existence.

He admitted, however, although with hesitation, that much of the peculiar gloom which thus afflicted him could be traced to a more natural and far more palpable origin — to the severe and long-continued illness — indeed to the evidently approaching dissolution — of a tenderly beloved sister, his sole companion for long years, his last and only relative on earth. "Her decease," he said, with a bitterness which I can never forget, "would leave him (him the hopeless and the frail) the last of the ancient race of the Ushers." While he spoke, the lady Madeline (for so was she called) passed slowly through a remote portion of the apartment, and, without having noticed my presence, disappeared. I regarded her with an utter astonishment not unmingled with dread; and yet I found it impossible to account for such feelings. A sensation of stupor oppressed me, as my eyes followed her retreating steps. When a door, at length, closed upon her, my glance sought instinctively and eagerly the countenance of the brother; but he had buried his face in his hands, and I could only perceive that a far more than ordinary

wanness had overspread the emaciated fingers through which trickled many passionate tears.

The disease of the lady Madeline had long baffled the skill of her physicians. A settled apathy, a gradual wasting away of the person, and frequent although transient affections of a partially cataleptical character, were the unusual diagnosis. Hitherto she had steadily borne up against the pressure of her malady, and had not betaken herself finally to bed; but on the closing in of the evening of my arrival at the house, she succumbed (as her brother told me at night with inexpressible agitation) to the prostrating power of the destroyer; and I learned that the glimpse I had obtained of her person would thus probably be the last I should obtain — that the lady, at least while living, would be seen by me no more.

For several days ensuing her name was unmentioned by either Usher or myself; and during this period I was busied in earnest endeavors to alleviate the melancholy of my friend. We painted and read together; or I listened, as if in a dream, to the wild improvisations of his speaking guitar. And thus, as a closer and still closer intimacy admitted me more unreservedly into the recesses of his spirit, the more bitterly did I perceive the futility of all attempt at cheering a mind from which darkness, as if an inherent positive quality, poured forth upon all objects of the moral and physical universe, in one unceasing radiation of gloom.

I shall ever bear about me a memory of the many solemn hours I thus spent alone with the master of the House of Usher. Yet I should fail in any attempt to convey an idea of the exact character of the studies, or of the occupations in which he involved me, or led me the way. An excited and highly distempered ideality threw a sulphur-

ous luster over all. His long, improvised dirges will ring forever in my ears. Among other things, I hold painfully in mind a certain singular perversion and amplification of the wild air of the last waltz of Von Weber. From the paintings over which his elaborate fancy brooded, and which grew, touch by touch, into vaguenesses at which I shuddered the more thrillingly because I shuddered knowing not why, — from these paintings (vivid as their images now are before me) I would in vain endeavor to educe more than a small portion which should lie within the compass of merely written words. By the utter simplicity, by the nakedness of his designs, he arrested and overawed attention. If ever mortal painted an idea, that mortal was Roderick Usher. For me, at least, in the circumstances then surrounding me, there arose out of the pure abstractions which the hypochondriac contrived to throw upon his canvas, an intensity of intolerable awe, no shadow of which felt I ever yet in the contemplation of the certainly glowing yet too concrete reveries of Fuseli.

One of the phantasmagoric conceptions of my friend, partaking not so rigidly of the spirit of abstraction, may be shadowed forth, although feebly, in words. A small picture presented the interior of an immensely long and rectangular vault or tunnel, with low walls, smooth, white, and without interruption or device. Certain accessory points of the design served well to convey the idea that this excavation lay at an exceeding depth below the surface of the earth. No outlet was observed in any portion of its vast extent, and no torch or other artificial source of light was discernible; yet a flood of intense rays rolled throughout, and bathed the whole in a ghastly and inappropriate splendor.

I have just spoken of that morbid condition of the auditory nerve which rendered all music intolerable to the sufferer, with the exception of certain effects of stringed instruments. It was, perhaps, the narrow limits to which he thus confined himself upon the guitar, which gave birth, in great measure, to the fantastic character of his performances. But the fervid *facility* of his *impromptus* could not be so accounted for. They must have been, and were, in the notes, as well as in the words of his wild fantasias (for he not unfrequently accompanied himself with rimed verbal improvisations), the result of that intense mental collectedness and concentration to which I had previously alluded as observable only in particular moments of the highest artificial excitement. The words of one of these rhapsodies I have easily remembered. I was, perhaps, the more forcibly impressed with it, as he gave it, because, in the under or mystic current of its meaning, I fancied that I perceived, and for the first time, a full consciousness on the part of Usher, of the tottering of his lofty reason upon her throne. The verses, which were entitled "The Haunted Palace," ran very nearly, if not accurately, thus: —

I

In the greenest of our valleys,
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace —
Radiant palace — reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion —
It stood there!
Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair.

II

Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow;
(This — all this — was in the olden
Time long ago)
And every gentle air that dallied,
In that sweet day,
Along the ramparts plumed and pallid,
A wingèd odor went away.

III

Wanderers in that happy valley
Through two luminous windows saw
Spirits moving musically
To a lute's well-tunèd law,
Round about a throne, where sitting
(Porphyrogene!)
In state his glory well befitting,
The ruler of the realm was seen.

IV

And all with pearl and ruby glowing
Was the fair palace door,
Through which came flowing, flowing, flowing
And sparkling evermore,
A troop of Echoes whose sweet duty
Was but to sing,
In voices of surpassing beauty,
The wit and wisdom of their king.

V

But evil things, in robes of sorrow,
Assailed the monarch's high estate
(Ah, let us mourn, for never morrow
Shall dawn upon him, desolate!);
And, round about his home, the glory
That blushed and bloomed
Is but a dim-remembered story
Of the old time entombed.

VI

And travelers now within that valley,
Through the red-litten windows, see
Vast forms that move fantastically
To a discordant melody;
While, like a rapid ghastly river,
Through the pale door,
A hideous throng rush out forever,
And laugh — but smile no more.

I well remember that suggestions arising from this ballad led us into a train of thought wherein there became manifest an opinion of Usher's which I mention not so much on account of its novelty (for other men have thought thus) as on account of the pertinacity with which he maintained it. This opinion, in its general form, was that of the sentience of all vegetable things. But, in his disordered fancy, the idea had assumed a more daring character, and trespassed, under certain conditions, upon the kingdom of inorganization. I lack words to express the

full extent or the earnest *abandon* of his persuasion. The belief, however, was connected (as I have previously hinted) with the gray stones of the home of his forefathers. The conditions of the sentience had been here, he imagined, fulfilled in the method of collocation of these stones — in the order of their arrangement, as well as in that of the many *fungi* which overspread them, and of the decayed trees which stood around — above all, in the long-undisturbed endurance of this arrangement, and in its reduplication in the still waters of the tarn. Its evidence — the evidence of the sentience — was to be seen, he said (and I here started as he spoke), in the gradual yet certain condensation of an atmosphere of their own about the waters and the walls. The result was discoverable, he added, in that silent, yet importunate and terrible influence which for centuries had molded the destinies of his family, and which made *him* what I now saw him — what he was. Such opinions need no comment, and I will make none.

Our books — the books which, for years, had formed no small portion of the mental existence of the invalid — were, as might be supposed, in strict keeping with this character of phantasm. We pored together over such works as the "Ververt et Chartreuse" of Gresset; the "Belphegor" of Machiavelli; the "Heaven and Hell" of Swedenborg; the "Subterranean Voyage of Nicholas Klimm" by Holberg; the "Chiromancy" of Robert Flud, of Jean D'Indagine, and of De la Chambre; the "Journey into the Blue Distance" of Tieck; and the "City of the Sun" of Campanella. One favorite volume was a small octavo edition of the "Directorium Inquisitorium," by the Dominican Eymeric de Cironne; and there were passages in Pomponius Mela, about the old African

Satyrs and Œgipans, over which Usher would sit dreaming for hours. His chief delight, however, was found in the perusal of an exceedingly rare and curious book in quarto Gothic — the manual of a forgotten church — the "Virgiliæ Mortuorum secundum Chorum Ecclesiæ Magunтinæ."

I could not help thinking of the wild ritual of this work, and of its probable influence upon the hypochondriac, when, one evening, having informed me abruptly that the lady Madeline was no more, he stated his intention of preserving her corpse for a fortnight (previously to its final interment) in one of the numerous vaults within the main walls of the building. The worldly reason, however, assigned for this singular proceeding, was one which I did not feel at liberty to dispute. The brother had been led to his resolution, so he told me, by consideration of the unusual character of the malady of the deceased, of certain obtrusive and eager inquiries on the part of her medical men, and of the remote and exposed situation of the burial ground of the family. I will not deny that when I called to mind the sinister countenance of the person whom I met upon the staircase, on the day of my arrival at the house, I had no desire to oppose what I regarded as at best but a harmless, and by no means an unnatural precaution.

At the request of Usher, I personally aided him in the arrangements for the temporary entombment. The body having been encoffined, we two alone bore it to its rest. The vault in which we placed it (and which had been so long unopened that our torches, half smothered in its oppressive atmosphere, gave us little opportunity for investigation) was small, damp, and entirely without means of admission for light; lying, at great depth, im-

mediately beneath that portion of the building in which was my own sleeping apartment. It had been used, apparently, in remote feudal times, for the worst purposes of a donjon-keep, and in later days, as a place of deposit for powder, or some other highly combustible substance, as a portion of its floor, and the whole interior of a long archway through which we reached it, were carefully sheathed with copper. The door, of massive iron, had been also similarly protected. Its immense weight caused an unusually sharp grating sound, as it moved upon its hinges.

Having deposited our mournful burden upon tressels within this region of horror, we partially turned aside the yet unscrewed lid of the coffin, and looked upon the face of the tenant. A striking similitude between the brother and sister now first arrested my attention; and Usher, divining, perhaps, my thoughts, murmured out some few words from which I learned that the deceased and himself had been twins, and that sympathies of a scarcely intelligible nature had always existed between them. Our glances, however, rested not long upon the dead — for we could not regard her unawed. The disease which had thus entombed the lady in the maturity of youth, had left, as usual in all maladies of a strictly cataleptical character, the mockery of a faint blush upon the bosom and the face, and that suspiciously lingering smile upon the lip which is so terrible in death. We replaced and screwed down the lid, and having secured the door of iron, made our way, with toil, into the scarcely less gloomy apartments of the upper portion of the house.

And now, some days of bitter grief having elapsed, an observable change came over the features of the mental

disorder of my friend. His ordinary manner had vanished. His ordinary occupations were neglected or forgotten. He roamed from chamber to chamber with hurried, unequal, and objectless step. The pallor of his countenance had assumed, if possible, a more ghastly hue — but the luminousness of his eye had utterly gone out. The once occasional huskiness of his tone was heard no more; and a tremulous quaver, as if of extreme terror, habitually characterized his utterance. There were times, indeed, when I thought his unceasingly agitated mind was laboring with some oppressive secret, to divulge which he struggled for the necessary courage. At times, again, I was obliged to resolve all into the mere inexplicable vagaries of madness; for I beheld him gazing upon vacancy for long hours, in an attitude of the profoundest attention, as if listening to some imaginary sound. It was no wonder that his condition terrified — that it infected me. I felt creeping upon me, by slow yet certain degrees, the wild influence of his own fantastic yet impressive superstitions.

It was, especially, upon retiring to bed late in the night of the seventh or eighth day after the placing of the lady Madeline within the donjon, that I experienced the full power of such feelings. Sleep came not near my couch, while the hours waned and waned away. I struggled to reason off the nervousness which had dominion over me. I endeavored to believe that much, if not all of what I felt, was due to the bewildering influence of the gloomy furniture of the room — of the dark and tattered draperies, which, tortured into motion by the breath of a rising tempest, swayed fitfully to and fro upon the walls, and rustled uneasily about the decorations of the bed. But my efforts were fruitless. An irrepressible tremor

gradually pervaded my frame; and, at length, there sat upon my very heart an incubus of utterly causeless alarm. Shaking this off with a gasp and a struggle, I uplifted myself upon the pillows, and peering earnestly within the intense darkness of the chamber, hearkened — I know not why, except that an instinctive spirit prompted me — to certain low and indefinite sounds which came, through the pauses of the storm, at long intervals, I knew not whence. Overpowered by an intense sentiment of horror, unaccountable yet unendurable, I threw on my clothes with haste (for I felt that I should sleep no more during the night), and endeavored to arouse myself from the pitiable condition into which I had fallen, by pacing rapidly to and fro through the apartment.

I had taken but few turns in this manner, when a light step on an adjoining staircase arrested my attention. I presently recognized it as that of Usher. In an instant afterward he rapped, with a gentle touch, at my door, and entered, bearing a lamp. His countenance was, as usual, cadaverously wan — but, moreover, there was a species of mad hilarity in his eyes — and evidently restrained hysteria in his whole demeanor. His air appalled me — but anything was preferable to the solitude which I had so long endured, and I even welcomed his presence as a relief.

"And you have not seen it?" he said abruptly, after having stared about him for some moments in silence— "you have not then seen it? — but stay! you shall." Thus speaking, and having carefully shaded his lamp, he hurried to one of the casements, and threw it freely open to the storm.

The impetuous fury of the entering gust nearly lifted

us from our feet. It was, indeed, a tempestuous yet sternly beautiful night, and one wildly singular in its terror and its beauty. A whirlwind had apparently collected its force in our vicinity; for there were frequent and violent alterations in the direction of the wind; and the exceeding density of the clouds (which hung so low as to press upon the turrets of the house) did not prevent our perceiving the lifelike velocity with which they flew careering from all points against each other, without passing away into the distance. I say that even their exceeding density did not prevent our perceiving this — yet we had no glimpse of the moon or stars — nor was there any flashing forth of the lightning. But the under surfaces of the huge masses of agitated vapor, as well as of terrestrial objects immediately around us, were glowing in the unnatural light of a faintly luminous and distinctly visible gaseous exhalation which hung about and enshrouded the mansion.

"You must not — you shall not behold this!" said I, shudderingly, to Usher, as I led him, with a gentle violence, from the window to a seat. "These appearances, which bewilder you, are merely electrical phenomena not uncommon — or it may be that they have their ghastly origin in the rank miasma of the tarn. Let us close this casement — the air is chilling and dangerous to your frame. Here is one of your favorite romances. I will read and you shall listen; and so we will pass away this terrible night together."

The antique volume which I had taken up was the "Mad Trist" of Sir Launcelot Canning; but I had called it a favorite of Usher's more in sad jest than in earnest; for, in truth, there is little in its uncouth and unimaginative prolixity which could have had interest for the lofty and

spiritual ideality of my friend. It was, however, the only book immediately at hand; and I indulged a vague hope that the excitement which now agitated the hypochondriac, might find relief (for the history of mental disorder is full of similar anomalies) even in the extremeness of the folly which I should read. Could I have judged, indeed, by the wild, overstrained air of vivacity with which he hearkened, or apparently hearkened, to the words of the tale, I might well have congratulated myself upon the success of my design.

I had arrived at that well-known portion of the story where Ethelred, the hero of the "Trist," having sought in vain for peaceable admission into the dwelling of the hermit, proceeds to make good an entrance by force. Here, it will be remembered, the words of the narrative run thus: —

"And Ethelred, who was by nature of a doughty heart, and who was now mighty withal, on account of the powerfulness of the wine which he had drunken, waited no longer to hold parley with the hermit, who, in sooth, was of an obstinate and maliceful turn; but, feeling the rain upon his shoulders, and fearing the rising of the tempest, uplifted his mace outright, and, with blows, made quickly room in the plankings of the door for his gauntleted hand; and now pulling therewith sturdily, he so cracked, and ripped, and tore all asunder, that the noise of the dry and hollow-sounding wood alarummed and reverberated throughout the forest."

At the termination of this sentence I started, and for a moment paused; for it appeared to me (although I at once concluded that my excited fancy had deceived me) — it appeared to me that, from some very remote portion

of the mansion, there came, indistinctly, to my ears what might have been, in its exact similarity of character, the echo (but a stifled and dull one certainly) of the very cracking and ripping sound which Sir Launcelot had so particularly described. It was, beyond doubt, the coincidence alone which had arrested my attention; for, amid the rattling of the sashes of the casements, and the ordinary commingled noises of the still increasing storm, the sound, in itself, had nothing, surely, which should have interested or disturbed me. I continued the story: —

"But the good champion Ethelred, now entering within the door, was sore enraged and amazed to perceive no signal of the maliceful hermit; but, in the stead thereof, a dragon of a scaly and prodigious demeanor, and of a fiery tongue, which sate in guard before a palace of gold, with a floor of silver; and upon the wall there hung a shield of shining brass with this legend enwritten: —

> Who entereth herein, a conqueror hath been;
> Who slayeth the dragon, the shield he shall win.

And Ethelred uplifted his mace, and struck upon the head of the dragon, which fell before him, and gave up his pesty breath, with a shriek so horrid and harsh, and withal so piercing, that Ethelred had fain to close his ears with his hands against the dreadful noise of it, the like whereof was never before heard."

Here again I paused abruptly, and now with a feeling of wild amazement — for there could be no doubt whatever that, in this instance, I did actually hear (although from what direction it proceeded I found it impossible to say) a low and apparently distant, but harsh, protracted, and most unusual screaming or grating sound — the exact

counterpart of what my fancy had already conjured up for the dragon's unnatural shriek as described by the romancer.

Oppressed, as I certainly was, upon the occurrence of this second and most extraordinary coincidence, by a thousand conflicting sensations, in which wonder and extreme terror were predominant, I still retained sufficient presence of mind to avoid exciting, by any observation, the sensitive nervousness of my companion. I was by no means certain that he had noticed the sounds in question; although, assuredly, a strange alteration had, during the last few minutes, taken place in his demeanor. From a position fronting my own, he had gradually brought round his chair, so as to sit with his face to the door of the chamber; and thus I could but partially perceive his features, although I saw that his lips trembled as if he were murmuring inaudibly. His head had dropped upon his breast — yet I knew that he was not asleep, from the wide and rigid opening of the eye as I caught a glance of it in profile. The motion of his body, too, was at variance with this idea — for he rocked from side to side with a gentle yet constant and uniform sway. Having rapidly taken notice of all this, I resumed the narrative of Sir Launcelot, which thus proceeded: —

"And now the champion, having escaped from the terrible fury of the dragon, bethinking himself of the brazen shield, and of the breaking up of the enchantment which was upon it, removed the carcass from out of the way before him, and approached valorously over the silver pavement of the castle to where the shield was upon the wall; which in sooth tarried not for his full coming, but fell down at his feet upon the silver floor, with a mighty great and terrible ringing sound."

No sooner had these syllables passed my lips, than — as if a shield of brass had indeed, at the moment, fallen heavily upon a floor of silver — I became aware of a distinct, hollow, metallic and clangorous, yet apparently muffled reverberation. Completely unnerved, I leaped to my feet; but the measured rocking movement of Usher was undisturbed. I rushed to the chair in which he sat. His eyes were bent fixedly before him, and throughout his whole countenance there reigned a stony rigidity. But, as I placed my hand upon his shoulder, there came a strong shudder over his whole person; a sickly smile quivered about his lips; and I saw that he spoke in a low, hurried, and gibbering murmur, as if unconscious of my presence. Bending closely over him, I at length drank in the hideous import of his words.

"Not hear it? — yes, I hear it, and *have* heard it. Long — long — long — many minutes, many hours, many days, have I heard it — yet I dared not — oh, pity me, miserable wretch that I am! — I dared not — I *dared* not speak! *We have put her living in the tomb!* Said I not that my senses were acute? I *now* tell you that I heard her first feeble movements in the hollow coffin. I heard them — many, many days ago — yet I dared not — *I dared not speak!* And now — to-night — Ethelred — ha! ha! — the breaking of the hermit's door, and the death-cry of the dragon, and the clangor of the shield! — say, rather, the rending of her coffin, and the grating of the iron hinges of her prison, and her struggles within the coppered archway of the vault! Oh, whither shall I fly? Will she not be here anon? Is she not hurrying to upbraid me for my haste? Have I not heard her footstep on the stair? Do I not distinguish that heavy and horri-

ble beating of her heart? Madman!" — here he sprang furiously to his feet, and shrieked out his syllables, as if in the effort he were giving up his soul — "*Madman! I tell you that she now stands without the door!*"

As if in the superhuman energy of his utterance there had been found the potency of a spell — the huge antique panels to which the speaker pointed threw slowly back, upon the instant, their ponderous and ebony jaws. It was the work of the rushing gust — but then without those doors there *did* stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the lady Madeline of Usher. There was blood upon her white robes, and the evidence of some bitter struggle upon every portion of her emaciated frame. For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold — then, with a low, moaning cry, fell heavily inward upon the person of her brother, and in her violent and now final death-agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse, and a victim to the terrors he had anticipated.

From that chamber, and from that mansion, I fled aghast. The storm was still abroad in all its wrath as I found myself crossing the old causeway. Suddenly there shot along the path a wild light, and I turned to see whence a gleam so unusual could have issued; for the vast house and its shadows were alone behind me. The radiance was that of the full, setting, and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through that once barely discernible fissure, of which I have before spoken as extending from the roof of the building, in a zigzag direction, to the base. While I gazed, this fissure rapidly widened — there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind — the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight — my brain reeled

as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder — there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters — and the deep and dank tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the "*House of Usher.*"

WHITE HORSE WINTER[1]

By Wilbur Daniel Steele

The little house where I was born, and in which I passed the earlier years of my life, stands about a hundred yards back from the beach and a little more than a mile down shore from Old Harbor. What we always knew as the 'Creek' runs in there, with plenty of water even at low tide to float my father's dory; and the flawless yellow face of a dune used to stand up behind the house, sheltering us from the northerlies that pick the scud from the ocean, a mile back across the Neck, and spatter it in the bay at our front door. My father and mother still live in the house, but the dune has shifted to the westward, and it is colder there on a winter night.

My older sister was born before my father and mother came from the Western Islands, so she had a recollection of green country; but we younger children knew nothing but the water and the sand. Strangely enough, my most vivid remembrance of the water is not from any of its wilder moods: I picture it with the tide out at evening, reflecting the face of the western sky, flat, garish-colored, silent, with a spur of mute fire reaching out at me along the surface of the Creek.

[1] In *The Atlantic Monthly*, April, 1912. Reprinted with the permission of *The Atlantic Monthly* and the author.

The dunes were the magic land, full of shifting shadows, and deceptive, where a little covey of beach-plums made themselves out as a far-away and impenetrable forest, especially when the mist came inland, and a footprint in the sand across a hollow appeared a vast convulsion of nature at the other end of a day's journey. And one felt the dunes always moving, rising up out of the sea, marching silently across the Neck, and advancing upon the little house. I can remember the spring when the sand ate up a pear-tree my father had brought from the Islands.

The dunes entered our lives, and became a part of them. Even now the sight of a strip of sand gets a queer grip on me, and to this day I am apt to catch myself spying out the sky-line with an indefinable and portentous dread. I cannot shake off this sensation, although I know perfectly what it is. It is a relic from that time which we have always called, in our family, White Horse Winter.

I remember my father's coming in one October day and standing a long time before the barometer which always hung behind the kitchen door. After a while he said to my mother in his broken English, —

"It weel be ver' bad weather to night — to-morrow."

That night when I was trying to get to sleep, I heard the skirmishers of a great wind feeling at the shingles above my head.

My next recollection is of the tumult of a gale outside, mingled with beating on the door downstairs, and distracted fragments of men's voices calling to one another of a vessel come ashore. I knew it must be at Round Hill or they would not have come past our house.

Then I was out, myself, where no boy of ten had any business to be, isolated in the centre of a vast disruption,

except when an occasional agitated phantom passed in the rocking darkness toward Round Hill Bars. I had an acute consciousness of doing wrong, and with all the fight to keep my feet in the chaos of sand and wind and scud, the thought of what my father would do if he came upon me lay heavy on my mind.

After a time one of the shore-dunes came up before me, black, with an aura of distracted sand about its crest and the sky behind it gray with the labor of dawn. The silhouettes of men, and of a few women, were running about over it and pointing to sea with jerking arms. But I was afraid to go up there, — still with the fear of my father's anger, — so I ran to the northward in the hollow a hundred yards or so before I felt it safe to venture upon the ridge, where I cowered down, a very small and very tired-out boy.

It was a full-rigged ship. Her main and mizzen were already gone, and her foremast writhed in dismal and contorted circles toward the sky, a frail, sensitive needle-point marking every onslaught and repulse of the fight below, where the vessel wallowed in the smother between the outer and inner bars. Inshore, on the torn and clamorous beach, the figures of the life-saving crew moved about their boat with futile gestures, lifting curved hands to their faces to scream soundless words at one another. The wind was like a blast from the colossal explosion that flared behind the eastern clouds.

But it was the water that fascinated me that morning. The Round Hill Bars make a talking, even in a moderate breeze, which can be heard in our kitchen across the Neck. Now their shouting seemed to me to fill up the whole bowl of the visible world, rumbling around its misty confines

in tangled reverberations. I could see the outer bar only as a white, distorted line athwart the gray, but the shoreward shallows were writhing, living things, gnawing at the sky with venomous teeth of spume, and giving birth in agony to the legions which advanced forever and forever upon the land.

My mother used sometimes to sing a little Portuguese song to my brother Antone, the baby. It had a part which ran: —

> The herd of the Sea King's White Horses
> Comes up on the shore to graze . . .

It pleased my boy mind, on this morning, to figure them as ravening, stung to frenzy by the lash of the gale, tossing maddened manes, and bellowing, — for horses were not common in that fisher country. Try as I might, my eyes would not stay on the wreck, but returned inevitably to those squadrons of white horses advancing out of the mist. They were very fearsome things to me at that time, although I was old enough to know that they were not alive and could not possibly get at me.

Then a tremendous wave broke and flattened out in a smother on the beach, and I was sure for a moment I had seen an actual horse struggling there. The next breaker overwhelmed the place, swirling, thunderous, shot its thin mottled tongue far up the sand and withdrew it seething into the undertow, — and now there could be no doubt that a horse was there, screaming, pawing at the treacherous sand, his wide glistening back horribly convulsed, and eyes and nostrils of flame.

Many and many a time since then I have had it all in a dream; and in the dream, even now, I am swept back into

something of the elemental terror that held the boy cowering on the ridge of sand while the great white stallion staggered up the face of the dune and stood against the sky, coughing and coughing and coughing.

Of a sudden, I knew that I must run away from that thing, and I scrambled out of my little burrow and ran, not daring to look back, not daring to ease my pace when the sand dragged too cruelly at my shoes, — ran and ran, — till I found myself in the safe haven of the front room at the little house, and my mother stirring a pan over the kitchen stove.

I staggered out to her, crying that a horse had come out of the water and run after me. She thought that I was feverish, had had a bad dream, and it occurred to me that I need not let her know I had been where I should not have been that morning. She packed me off to bed again, and when I woke in the afternoon I was of even minds myself whether I had dreamed it all or not. Certainly it was cut from the cloth of a dream.

During the weeks that followed I heard a deal about the wreck, from my father and from others who came past on the state road, and stopped to chat. It was a bad affair, that wreck. The shore people could see her men, now and then when the rack drifted aside for a moment, swarming over the deck like ants disturbed by a pail of water. One of these glimpses showed them the crew clustered about the boats on the lee side, and then the life-savers burned in vain the signal which means, "Do not attempt to leave in your own boats"; the next lifting of the curtain discovered the ship's decks bare of life, and seventeen bodies were dragged from the surf that day.

But a strange thing happened when the life-savers

rowed out to the hulk after the sea had gone down. In the cabin they came upon a young man, dry-clothed, sitting before a fire in the stove, plainly much shaken by the experiences of the night, but still with a grip on himself. He asked if the boats had come ashore all right, and when Captain Hall told him, he seemed taken aback.

"Nothing come ashore?" he asked.

"Nothing alive," said the captain. The other looked into the fire a while, white, and shaking a little.

"I was afeared to go with the sailors," he said, after a time.

Of course the story did not come to me in this straight sequence, but merely as haphazard snatches from the gossip of my elders, some of it not clearly till years afterwards—for the details of a great wreck are treasured among people of the sea so long as the generation lasts.

It was almost a week before I went out on the dunes again. Although I was now convinced that I had seen something that was not, still even a bad dream is not a thing for a child to shake off lightly. But my sister Agnes's eighteenth birthday was coming soon now, and it was always a custom in our family to signalize such events with a cake and bayberry candles. So I was off this day to the north of Snail Road, where the bottom of a certain hollow is covered with a mat of bayberry bushes. It takes a good many bayberries to make even a small candle, and the dark was beginning to come down when the basket was filled and I started back across the sand-hills toward home.

The dunes were very silent and very misty and very lonely that evening; I trudged along with my small head going about like the mythical owl's, but the dusk remained

empty of any horror till I had come across Snail Road and into the region of black sand where one may scoop out a little hole and drink fresh water. I almost always did this whether I was thirsty or not, but that night I was saved the trouble of scooping the hole — or would have been had I cared to take advantage of the great glistening gash that lay in my path. It was no work of human hands. All about the place the sand was churned and scarred by enormous, deep tracks, and a double thread of them led away over the eastern skyline. Then I was running again, as I had that other morning, running all the way to the little house, careless of the bayberries that strewed my backward trail.

Two nights after, we were all sitting around the fire in our kitchen. There was no wind that evening and the tide was down beyond the flats, so that all was very quiet outside the little house, and a note of distant trumpeting came plain to us through the crisp night. It was surely a queer sound for our country, but its significance passed me till my father spoke to my mother.

"It's the white horse again," he said.

My mother nodded, without curiosity or surprise.

"Yes," she answered, "we must keep Zhoe" — that was I, Joe — "off the dunes more."

But they could not keep me off the dunes entirely, now that the white horse had become actual and an object of common gossip. I took an adventurous pleasure in climbing to the top of the hill behind the house and overlooking the country of hummocks. Especially was this fine to do of an early evening, when the light had left the sand and the ridges stood out black against the sky.

I saw him many times from this point of security —

always as a dark, far-away silhouette, tremendous, laboring over the back of a dune or standing with his great head flung up and tail streaming on the wind. His presence there gave the whole dune-land a new aspect for me — as of a familiar country grown sinister and full of the shadow of disaster. Nights when the wind was northerly, his racketing sometimes came to me in the loft where my cot stood; then I would shiver under the clothes and fall asleep to dream of being lost in a wilderness of shifting dunes, and that great shaggy white beast above me on a ridge, coughing and coughing and coughing. Once he must have come plunging down the face of our own hill, because we were startled by a splashing of sand on the shingles of an outhouse, followed by a great snorting and a ripping of fence timbers. That night even my father and mother were pale.

For I was not the only one who was afraid. Some of the men came out from Old Harbor, with lines one day to take the animal, and at first sight of him, suddenly, over the angle of a dune, dropped their entanglements and fled back past our house, running heavily. And that was in the flat sunlight of midday. After that men went over to Round Hill Station by other and circuitous routes.

One of these evenings, while I was crouching on the hill with a delightful shiver playing along my spine, a strange man came up and stood a few yards to one side of me, looking out to the eastward. The white horse was there, perhaps a half mile off, outlined against a bank of silver that came rolling in from the ocean. The newcomer regarded him a long time without moving; then I, being a little afraid of the man, slipped out of the bushes and down the hill to the little house.

The dusk was already thick when he came down the dune and stopped to pass a word with my father, who was working over a net near the gate. I remember my sister Agnes peering curiously at the figure indistinct in the gloom, and my mother whispering to her that it was the man they had taken off the wreck. That made a tremendous impression on me. I was glad when my father asked him to sit a while by the fire.

From my vantage-point behind my mother's chair, I could examine him better than I dared do on the ridge. He was a smallish man, of a wiry build rather uncommon among our own people, whose strength is apt to come upon them with an amount of flesh. His skin was not brown but red, hairy about the wrists, — I thought of it as brittle. His hair was almost the color of his skin, his features were heavy. He sat or stood with elbows out and thumbs tucked in his belt, and he had little to say. I can give his age definitely as twenty-eight at that time.

From the moment he entered, the stranger seemed unable to keep his slow-moving gray eyes away from my sister Agnes, who stood leaning against the door which led into the front room. Those two were as far apart as the two poles. It is hard for a small boy to know how his brothers and sisters really appear, but looking back out of later years I remember her as rather tall for a girl, full-formed, straight, dark as the rest of us, and with a look of contempt in her black eyes for this alien whom she had no means of comprehending.

For a time my father talked about the wreck, putting questions, hazarding technical opinions in the jargon of the sea. The stranger's replies were monosyllabic and vague. Then in a pause the neighing of the white horse

came in to us, and the man started up with an abrupt scraping of his shoes on the boards. I am sure that Agnes believed he was frightened, and that she took no pains to hide it. After that the talk turned naturally on the white horse, going back and forth between my father and mother, for the stranger had even less to say now than before.

Jem Hodges (that was the stranger's name) came the following day and sat on the front porch, watching father who was tarring weir twine in the yard. He had nothing to say — simply sat there with his thumbs tucked in his belt. Agnes came in and said to my mother, —

"He's a dummy — I never seen such a dummy, ma."

"I don' know, Aggie," my mother answered her. "He ain't our kind, an' you can't tell about things you ain't used to."

That was my mother's way.

Agnes flounced out of the kitchen in a manner which had no significance to me then, for my rudimentary wits could perceive no possible connection between her action and the silence of the little man on the porch outside.

I think I can say now what the connection was. Among other things the world has taught me this — that no two men do the same thing in exactly the same way. Jem Hodges was wooing my sister Agnes. Little wonder that her spirit was restive under that wooing, when all the blood of the race in her veins sang of the lover's fervor, the quick eye, the heart speaking in words, the abandon of caresses. And here was a man, fulfilling none of our conventions of beauty, who sat imperturbable, impassive, saying nothing, and making her come to him. I am sure that he did it without planning or analyzing, — I think half of it was constraint and all of it instinct. And Agnes

might flounce out of the room as she would: sooner or later I saw her again at the front of the house.

This went on for two or three weeks. Jem Hodges came almost every day to sit on the porch a while, after which he sometimes wandered away in the growing evening over our own dune. Again and again I saw him standing there, as on the first evening, for a long time without motion, looking over the hummocks. Sometimes I could hear him whistling under his breath an air that was very strange and outlandish to me, then, who had never heard the like. Many years later I heard one of the great tenors of the world sing the same air, and it thrilled me, but not in the same way.

On the evening of the twenty-eighth of November (I have the date from Agnes) I was ensconced in my bushy retreat, watching the night take hold of the world of sand. Jem Hodges stood on the ridge to the east of me. Every minute that passed robbed his motionless figure of some detail, and lent to it a portion of the flat mystery of the night. I had seen the white horse once that evening, topping a rise far off to the northward, and then no more till I was suddenly aware of a gigantic, indistinct form moving up hill toward me amid a vast *shuf-shuf* of troubled sand.

I was terribly frightened for the instant; then I knew it was a matter only of hopping over the bank behind me and sliding down to the very back door of the little house. I had slipped from the bushes and was almost to the bottom of the smothering slope, when I heard such a plunging in the sand above that my wits came near leaving me again; I made wild and futile plunges, and cried out to my sister, whom I saw in the open doorway. I had no thought in the world but that it was the white horse charging down.

I had almost gained the house, a pathetic small figure of panic, when I felt myself brushed aside with a violence which left me sprawling, terrified, on my back in the sand, with a confused impression as of something passing through the doorway where my sister had stood. It was not beyond me at that moment to imagine the white horse, overcarried by the impetus of his charge, blundering right on into the kitchen of the little house.

Jem Hodges had passed completely out of my mind, and it was Jem whom I found in the kitchen, ill at ease, confronted by my sister. Agnes I hardly knew that evening — she was like a new and strange person, aflame with anger and a high, emphatic beauty, speaking tensely, with the nerve-twanging upward slur at the end of the phrase which discovered the blood of the Island race through all the veneer of public school. The accumulated unrest of weeks had found a vent at last.

"You — you — Oh, you coward!" she reviled him, "you little sneaking coward, you! — an' they call you a *man!*" Her voice was a whispered shriek, her clenched hands moved before her as though to do him harm.

Jem was white, and still breathing hard.

"A man," Agnes went on, "they call you a man — an' you knock over little children so's you can save your own little hairy hide. You lose your eyesight — an' your mind — from seein' a horse walkin' over some sand. Agh!"

Then she turned to me with a fierce gesture of protection.

"Zhoe, — poor little Zhoe, — he hurt you, didn't he? There, don't cry no more — you're more of a man 'n he is, — ain't you, little Zhoe?"

My face was in the folds of her skirt and I still sobbed out

the after-swell of the terror, but I could hear Jem's voice speaking. He always seemed to me, when talking, to be expending his words with immense care.

"The horse wouldn't harm Joe," he pronounced.

That was a signal for Agnes to fly at him once more.

"No! — won't harm him — you slip that out easy because Zhoe's no folks of yourn — an' never will be either. Agh! — God! — I could kill you if you weren't such a worm!"

"He wouldn't harm Joe, nor nobody."

The man's words were unsteady but assured. Agnes's voice went from her control completely; she came close to him and screamed in his face, —

"Harm nobody? — Oh! — Oh! — Little man, go an' bring me that white horse — You been makin' eyes at me — Oh, I seen 'em! — Now if you want me — *me* — go out an' get the white horse that won't harm nobody, — with your two bare hands, — an' bring him to me."

For that moment, my sister was out of her mind.

Jem came over and laid an absent hand on my shoulder, as if he had thought to comfort me, and then had fallen into abstraction before the act was accomplished. After a moment of vacant quiet he looked up at Agnes.

"An' you tell me that, too," he said.

All that evening I was haunted by a picture of the silent man, with his hard red thumbs tucked in his belt, pursuing a shadow of horror through the black dune country. This distressed me so much that I finally crawled out from beneath the table, where I had been lying, and whispered my fears in my sister's ear. She had been very quiet all evening, but when she understood what I was saying she gave a little bitter laugh and put her arm around me.

"Don't be afeared, Zhoe," she whispered her answer. "The little man is tight behind his own door this night." Then she fell to brooding once more.

When Jem came to the little house the following day he carried a piece of line in one hand. He sat down as usual on the front steps. The picture of him that evening has remained to me the most vivid memory of my young days, — why, I cannot say. I peeped out of the front window and saw him there, silhouetted against the blazing waters of the bay — the vast, silent and expressive shout of the departing day casting out at me the unexpressive man.

Agnes came around a corner and stood, looking down at the line in Jem's hand. He looked down at it, too.

"I been thinkin' it over," he said.

"You're a-scared to do it!" she answered.

For a long time they remained there without moving or speaking, both looking down at the line.

"You're a-scared to do it!" Agnes repeated at length, and Jem got up from the steps and went out through the gate toward the dunes. Never have I seen the whole world so saturated with passive flame as it seemed to me, peering from the gloom of the front room that evening.

At supper Agnes talked feverishly of many things, but ate nothing. All of us noticed it, and my mother remarked upon it. The silence outside was so complete that the riffle of the coming tide was audible in the pauses, and once I heard the note of the stallion, far away over the sand. Then my sister broke out into a humming tune — the first and last time I ever knew her to sing at table. I remember wondering why her eyes, which were usually so steady and straight-seeing, turned here and there without rest,

and why, after the meal, she wandered from window to window, and never stopped to look out at any.

That was to be a gala night for me. My father had been raking up the brush and leaves about the place for a week, heaping them, together with bits of old net and tarry shreds of canvas, in half a dozen piles before the house, and to-night I was allowed to set them off. I had them blazing soon after supper was over, and a fine monstrous spectacle they made for me, who danced up and down the lines full of elemental exultation, and then ran off to call Agnes to see my handiwork.

I could not find her anywhere in the house; I went through all the rooms and out and around the yard. No one knew where she was. My mother thought she had seen her with a shawl over her head, but had taken no particular notice at the time. It didn't matter, at any rate — Agnes often wandered out toward town in the early evening. The rest of us sat on the steps and watched the fires, baby brother and all, but they had lost something of their enchantment for me. I was pursuing an idea, an obscure apprehension.

"I b'lieve Aggie's gone to the dunes," I proclaimed, at length.

"Dunes!" my mother cried out. "No, — you're foolish, Zhoe. Why?"

Thus confronted by the direct question, I found my reasonings too diaphanous for a logical answer.

"I dunno," I mumbled, abashed.

But I had set them worrying. It is a strange fact that fisher-folk are at once the bravest and the most apprehensive people I have any knowledge of. When worried, my mother was generally restless with her hands, while my

father betrayed his anxiety by unwonted profanity and by aimless expeditions to inspect the dory mooring in the creek.

These things they did to-night, my mother on the steps, impassive save for her writhing fingers, my father visible in peripatetic red glimpses as he wandered, muttering, about the yard. He called out that he was going to step down and take a look at the boat.

After that he was gone a long time — half an hour I should say — while the flames died down over the fires, replacing the uncertain flicker in the yard with a smooth pervasive glow. When he at length reappeared, I wondered to see sand-burs clinging about the edges of his trousers. The nearest sand-burs I knew of were half a mile off toward Snail Road.

I don't know how long we waited after that. My mother put the baby to bed, and returned to sit with restless hands; my father, muttering curses the while, added bits of driftwood to the fires, with the instinct inbred in sea-people of keeping a beacon alight.

Their coming was as the coming of an apparition seen suddenly in the firelight, tottering forward on limbs too frail for its inexplicable and uncouth frame. Then my mother cried out, and my father's oath was a prayer, and it came to me that the apparition was not one but two figures, one bearing the other.

Jem staggered up between the fires and laid his burden down with her head in my mother's lap. My sister's face was a queer color, her eyes were closed. I was bewildered and afraid.

"Scared," Jem panted. He collapsed rather than sat upon the lowest step. "He never touched her — just scared her — out of her head."

None of us doubted for an instant who "he" was. I ran into the kitchen under my mother's order for water. She worked with a sort of feverish calm over the girl in her lap, while Jem sat, head in hands, and back heaving. After a little he got up and regarded my sister's face.

"She'll come round," he said.

It may have been a question. If it was, the answer was at its heels.

Agnes's eyes opened at the sound of the words, — opened with a shadow of unutterable horror behind them, — her hands went out to him in an agony of rigid appeal. Jem knelt down with an arm about her shoulders.

"You're all right," he comforted her, still expending his words, as it were, with care.

"He came out of the sand — right up out of the sand at me" — There was a certain queer quality of raving in Agnes's whisper. She clung to him with the impossible strength of terror. "He came out of the sand — his eyes were red — oh, red — I could see them — and — an' I couldn't run — couldn't step — not step —"

"Yes — yes — Home now, Miss Aggie." Jem's red hand was on her hair, soothing, as one might a child.

"How did I come here?" She put the question abruptly — in her own voice now — took her arms from his neck with a gesture of shame and laid them across my mother's shoulders.

It was my mother who answered her query.

"Meester Hodges bring you, Aggie girl."

Agnes's eyes went to the little man, but he was lost in abstract contemplation of the nearest fire-bed.

My mother went on, "Ain't you goin' to thank Meester Hodges, Aggie?"

Jem turned at that, lifting an imperative hand.

"Wait!" said he. "Wait! You told me — to bring the horse."

Agnes cried out, "No! — no! — Oh, please —"

"You told me. Wait — an' don't be afeared."

He leaned against a post of the railing, his red skin seeming to take to itself all the dying light of the embers, and began to whistle, low at first, then filling out clear and high and throbbing. He whistled in a peculiar way which I have never observed in any other.

The air was half familiar to me, the one he had played with softly on the dune behind the house. But to me and to my people, bred to the cloying accents of the South, that clear, soaring, sweet thread of Northern melody came as strange and alien and tingling, filling our own familiar night with the quality of expectancy. Jem Hodges was a new man before our eyes; for the first time in our knowledge of him, he was giving utterance to himself. He swept through the melody once, and twice, and paused.

"He's far," he said, and a note of whickering came to us from the eastward dunes. He caught up the air again, playing with it wonderful things, sweeping the little huddled family of us out of our intimate house and glowing, familiar yard, into a strange, wind-troubled country of his own.

And this time it was the night, not the sea, that gave up the great white stallion, rising to our fence in majestic flight, exploding from the flat darkness.

Jem cried, "No! — no! — don't be afeared!" — for we were making the gestures of panic.

The animal came to him, picking a dainty way about the coals for all his tremendous weight, making a wonderfully fine picture with the fiery sheen over his vast deep chest,

along the glistening flanks where the sweat stood, turning the four white fetlocks to agitated pinions of flame. Thus, I believe, the horses of the gods came to the ancients.

He stood over us there, heaving, mountainous, filling half the sphere of our sight. But his nose was in the bosom of Jem Hodges's coat, and his ears pricked forward to the breathing of Jem Hodges's song without words. The little man wandered on and on, picking a phrase from here and from there, wooing, recounting, laughing, exulting, weeping, never hating. When he suddenly began to speak in words, it was as though he had come down a great way, out of his own element.

"It had to be — after all," he said. "After all. — Now I suppose I've got to take you on to the rich American leddy? She'll keep you fine — in a fine paddock — you — you of the big wide moorlands — free gentleman of half an English county. — Ah, it's bad, Baron boy —"

Then he was talking to us — to Agnes.

"I been lyin' to myself — tryin' to make myself believe Baron was away off and wild — I wanted to have him free! like the air — long as he could. The rich leddy will pay five hundred pounds. — Why do I need it? — we're comfortable on our little place at home. Why? Because father says so — an' a man must do what his father says — till he gets a wife an' family of his own. I thought Baron was gone when the ship got wrecked — I was near glad of it — he's no boy to pen up — in a paddock — with a ribbon on, mebby. An' when I knew he wasn't gone — why — I fair couldn't do it — put it off an' off an' off. Ah, Baron, Baron, — they gave me you when I could pick you up in the meadow, — but a man's got to do what his father says —"

He fell to musing, then, running his hand over the broad forehead, combing out the silk of the forelock, caressing a fine ear. Then, as if to himself, —

"Till he gets a wife of his own!"

He spoke to my sister.

"Come here, Miss Aggie."

Agnes went to him, and at his command laid her fingers on Baron's nose. The animal arched his great neck — oh, an indescribable gesture! — and mouthed the back of her hand. I thought of Agnes at that moment as the bravest girl in all the world. Agnes was a stranger to me that night.

After a little time my mother got up, saying that I ought to have been in my bed long ago. My father came in with us, so that we left only the white horse and my sister and Jem Hodges, standing in a black group against the glow of the fires.

OUR LADY'S JUGGLER[1]

By Anatole France

In the days of King Louis there was a poor juggler in France, a native of Compiègne, Barnaby by name, who went about from town to town performing feats of skill and strength.

On fair days he would unfold an old worn-out carpet in the public square, and when by means of a jovial address, which he had learned of a very ancient juggler, and which he never varied in the least, he had drawn together the children and loafers, he assumed extraordinary attitudes, and balanced a tin plate on the tip of his nose. At first the crowd would feign indifference.

But when, supporting himself on his hands face downwards, he threw into the air six copper balls, which glittered in the sunshine, and caught them again with his feet; or when throwing himself backwards until his heels and the nape of the neck met, giving his body the form of a perfect wheel, he would juggle in this posture with a dozen knives, a murmur of admiration would escape the spectators, and pieces of money rain down upon the carpet.

Nevertheless, like the majority of those who lived by

[1] In "Mother of Pearl"; copyright by John Lane Company, 1908. Reprinted by permission.

their wits, Barnaby of Compiègne had a great struggle to make a living.

Earning his bread in the sweat of his brow, he bore rather more than his share of the penalties consequent upon the misdoings of our father Adam.

Again, he was unable to work as constantly as he would have been willing to do. The warmth of the sun and the broad daylight were as necessary to enable him to display his brilliant parts as to the trees if flower and fruit should be expected of them. In winter time he was nothing more than a tree stripped of its leaves, and as it were dead. The frozen ground was hard to the juggler, and, like the grasshopper of which Marie de France tells us, the inclement season caused him to suffer both cold and hunger. But as he was simple-natured he bore his ills patiently.

He had never meditated on the origin of wealth, nor upon the inequality of human conditions. He believed firmly that if this life should prove hard, the life to come could not fail to redress the balance, and this hope upheld him. He did not resemble those thievish and miscreant Merry Andrews who sell their souls to the devil. He never blasphemed God's name; he lived uprightly, and although he had no wife of his own, he did not covet his neighbour's, since woman is ever the enemy of the strong man, as it appears by the history of Samson recorded in the Scriptures.

In truth, his was not a nature much disposed to carnal delights, and it was a greater deprivation to him to forsake the tankard than the Hebe who bore it. For whilst not wanting in sobriety, he was fond of a drink when the weather waxed hot. He was a worthy man who feared God, and was very devoted to the Blessed Virgin.

Never did he fail on entering a church to fall upon his

knees before the image of the Mother of God, and offer up this prayer to her:

"Blessed Lady, keep watch over my life until it shall please God that I die, and when I am dead, ensure to me the possession of the joys of paradise."

II

Now on a certain evening after a dreary wet day, as Barnaby pursued his road, sad and bent, carrying under his arm his balls and knives wrapped up in his old carpet, on the watch for some barn where, though he might not sup, he might sleep, he perceived on the road, going in the same direction as himself, a monk, whom he saluted courteously. And as they walked at the same rate they fell into conversation with one another.

"Fellow traveller," said the monk, "how comes it about that you are clothed all in green? Is it perhaps in order to take the part of a jester in some mystery play?"

"Not at all, good father," replied Barnaby. "Such as you see me, I am called Barnaby, and for my calling I am a juggler. There would be no pleasanter calling in the world if it would always provide one with daily bread."

"Friend Barnaby," returned the monk, "be careful what you say. There is no calling more pleasant than the monastic life. Those who lead it are occupied with the praises of God, the Blessed Virgin, and the saints; and, indeed, the religious life is one ceaseless hymn to the Lord."

Barnaby replied, —

"Good father, I own that I spoke like an ignorant man. Your calling cannot be in any respect compared to mine,

and although there may be some merit in dancing with a penny balanced on a stick on the tip of one's nose, it is not a merit which comes within hail of your own. Gladly would I, like you, good father, sing my office day by day, and especially the office of the most Holy Virgin, to whom I have vowed a singular devotion. In order to embrace the monastic life I would willingly abandon the art by which from Soissons to Beauvais I am well known in upwards of six hundred towns and villages."

The monk was touched by the juggler's simplicity, and as he was not lacking in discernment, he at once recognized in Barnaby one of those men of whom it is said in the Scriptures: "Peace on earth to men of good will." And for this reason he replied —

"Friend Barnaby, come with me, and I will have you admitted into the monastery of which I am Prior. He who guided St. Mary of Egypt in the desert set me upon your path to lead you into the way of salvation."

It was in this manner, then, that Barnaby became a monk. In the monastery into which he was received the religious vied with one another in the worship of the Blessed Virgin, and in her honour each employed all the knowledge and all the skill which God had given him.

The prior on his part wrote books dealing according to the rules of scholarship with the virtues of the Mother of God.

Brother Maurice, with a deft hand, copied out these treatises upon sheets of vellum.

Brother Alexander adorned the leaves with delicate miniature paintings. Here were displayed the Queen of Heaven seated upon Solomon's throne, and while four lions were on guard at her feet, around the nimbus which encircled her head hovered seven doves, which are the seven

gifts of the Holy Spirit, the gifts, namely, of Fear, Piety, Knowledge, Strength, Counsel, Understanding, and Wisdom. For her companions she had six virgins with hair of gold, namely, Humility, Prudence, Seclusion, Submission, Virginity, and Obedience.

At her feet were two little naked figures, perfectly white, in an attitude of supplication. These were souls imploring her all-powerful intercession for their soul's health, and we may be sure not imploring in vain.

Upon another page facing this, Brother Alexander represented Eve, so that the Fall and the Redemption could be perceived at one and the same time — Eve the Wife abased, and Mary the Virgin exalted.

Furthermore, to the marvel of the beholder, this book contained presentments of the Well of Living Waters, the Fountain, the Lily, the Moon, the Sun, and the Garden Enclosed of which the Song of Songs tells us, the Gate of Heaven and the City of God, and all these things were symbols of the Blessed Virgin.

Brother Marbode was likewise one of the most loving children of Mary.

He spent all his days carving images in stone, so that his beard, his eyebrows, and his hair were white with dust, and his eyes continually swollen and weeping; but his strength and cheerfulness were not diminished, although he was now well gone in years, and it was clear that the Queen of Paradise still cherished her servant in his old age. Marbode represented her seated upon a throne, her brow encircled with an orb-shaped nimbus set with pearls. And he took care that the folds of her dress should cover the feet of her, concerning whom the prophet declared: "My beloved is as a garden enclosed."

Sometimes, too, he depicted her in the semblance of a child full of grace, and appearing to say, "Thou art my God, even from my mother's womb."

In the priory, moreover, were poets who composed hymns in Latin, both in prose and verse, in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and amongst the company was even a brother from Picardy who sang the miracles of Our Lady in rhymed verse and in the vulgar tongue.

III

Being a witness of this emulation in praise and the glorious harvest of their labours, Barnaby mourned his own ignorance and simplicity.

"Alas!" he sighed, as he took his solitary walk in the little shelterless garden of the monastery, "wretched wight that I am, to be unable, like my brothers, worthily to praise the Holy Mother of God, to whom I have vowed my whole heart's affection. Alas! alas! I am but a rough man and unskilled in the arts, and I can render you in service, blessed Lady, neither edifying sermons, nor treatises set out in order according to rule, nor ingenious paintings, nor statues truthfully sculptured, nor verses whose march is measured to the beat of feet. No gift have I, alas!"

After this fashion he groaned and gave himself up to sorrow. But one evening, when the monks were spending their hour of liberty in conversation, he heard one of them tell the tale of a religious man who could repeat nothing other than the Ave Maria. This poor man was despised for his ignorance; but after his death there issued forth from his mouth five roses in honour of the five letters of the

name Mary (Marie), and thus his sanctity was made manifest.

Whilst he listened to this narrative Barnaby marvelled yet once again at the loving kindness of the Virgin; but the lesson of that blessed death did not avail to console him, for his heart overflowed with zeal, and he longed to advance the glory of his Lady, who is in heaven.

How to compass this he sought but could find no way, and day by day he became the more cast down, when one morning he awakened filled full with joy, hastened to the chapel, and remained there alone for more than an hour. After dinner he returned to the chapel once more.

And, starting from that moment, he repaired daily to the chapel at such hours as it was deserted, and spent within it a good part of the time which the other monks devoted to the liberal and mechanical arts. His sadness vanished, nor did he any longer groan.

A demeanour so strange awakened the curiosity of the monks.

These began to ask one another for what purpose Brother Barnaby could be indulging so persistently in retreat.

The prior, whose duty it is to let nothing escape him in the behaviour of his children in religion, resolved to keep a watch over Barnaby during his withdrawals to the chapel. One day, then, when he was shut up there after his custom, the prior, accompanied by two of the older monks, went to discover through the chinks in the door what was going on within the chapel.

They saw Barnaby before the altar of the Blessed Virgin, head downwards, with his feet in the air, and he was juggling with six balls of copper and a dozen knives.

In honour of the Holy Mother of God he was performing those feats which aforetime had won him most renown. Not recognizing that the simple fellow was thus placing at the service of the Blessed Virgin his knowledge and skill, the two old monks exclaimed against the sacrilege.

The prior was aware how stainless was Barnaby's soul, but he concluded that he had been seized with madness. They were all three preparing to lead him swiftly from the chapel, when they saw the Blessed Virgin descend the steps of the altar and advance to wipe away with a fold of her azure robe the sweat which was dropping from her juggler's forehead.

Then the prior, falling upon his face upon the pavement, uttered these words —

"Blessed are the simple-hearted, for they shall see God."

"Amen!" responded the old brethren, and kissed the ground.

THE CONSTANT TIN SOLDIER

By Hans Christian Andersen

There were once five and twenty tin soldiers, all brothers, for they were the offspring of the same old tin spoon. Each man shouldered his gun, kept his eyes well to the front, and wore the smartest red and blue uniform imaginable. The first thing they heard in their new world, when the lid was taken off the box, was a little boy clapping his hands and crying, "Soldiers, soldiers!" It was his birthday, and they had just been given to him; so he lost no time in setting them up on the table. All the soldiers were exactly alike with one exception, and he differed from the rest in having only one leg. For he was made last, and there was not quite enough tin left to finish him. However, he stood just as well on his one leg as the others on two; in fact he is the very one who is to become famous. On the table where they were being set up were many other toys; but the chief thing which caught the eye was a delightful paper castle. You could see through the tiny windows, right into the rooms. Outside there were some little trees surrounding a small mirror, representing a lake, whose surface reflected the waxen swans which were swimming about on it. It was altogether charming, but the prettiest thing of all was a

little maiden standing at the open door of the castle. She, too, was cut out of paper, but she wore a dress of the lightest gauze, with a dainty little blue ribbon over her shoulders, by way of a scarf, set off by a brilliant spangle as big as her whole face. The little maid was stretching out both arms, for she was a dancer, and in the dance, one of her legs was raised so high into the air that the tin soldier could see absolutely nothing of it, and supposed that she, like himself, had but one leg.

"That would be the very wife for me!" he thought; "but she is much too grand; she lives in a palace, while I only have a box, and then there are five and twenty of us to share it. No, that would be no place for her! but I must try to make her acquaintance!" Then he lay down full length behind a snuffbox which stood on the table. From that point he could have a good look at the little lady, who continued to stand on one leg without losing her balance.

Late in the evening the other soldiers were put into their box, and the people of the house went to bed. Now was the time for the toys to play; they amused themselves with paying visits, fighting battles, and giving balls. The tin soldiers rustled about in their box, for they wanted to join the games, but they could not get the lid off. The nut-crackers turned somersaults, and the pencil scribbled nonsense on the slate. There was such a noise that the canary woke up and joined in, but his remarks were in verse. The only two who did not move were the tin soldier and the little dancer. She stood as stiff as ever on tiptoe, with her arms spread out; he was equally firm on his one leg, and he did not take his eyes off her for a moment.

Then the clock struck twelve, when pop! up flew the

lid of the snuffbox, but there was no snuff in it, no! There was a little black goblin, a sort of Jack-in-the-box.

"Tin soldier!" said the goblin, "have the goodness to keep your eyes to yourself."

But the tin soldier feigned not to hear.

"Ah! you just wait till to-morrow," said the goblin.

In the morning, when the children got up, they put the tin soldier on the window frame, and whether it was caused by the goblin or by a puff of wind, I do not know, but all at once the window burst open, and the soldier fell head foremost from the third story.

It was a terrific descent, and he landed at last, with his leg in the air, and rested on his cap, with his bayonet fixed between two paving stones. The maidservant and the little boy ran down at once to look for him; but although they almost trod on him, they could not see him. Had the soldier only called, "here I am," they would easily have found him; but he did not think it proper to shout when he was in uniform.

Presently it began to rain, and the drops fell faster and faster, till there was a regular torrent. When it was over two street boys came along.

"Look out!" said one; "there is a tin soldier! He shall go for a sail."

So they made a boat out of a newspaper and put the soldier into the middle of it, and he sailed away down the gutter; both boys ran alongside, clapping their hands. Good heavens! what waves there were in the gutter, and what a current, but then it certainly had rained cats and dogs. The paper boat danced up and down, and now and then whirled round and round. A shudder ran through the tin soldier, but he remained undaunted, and did not

move a muscle, only looked straight before him with his gun shouldered. All at once the boat drifted under a long wooden tunnel, and it became as dark as it was in his box.

"Where on earth am I going to now!" thought he. "Well, well, it is all the fault of that goblin! Oh, if only the little maiden were with me in the boat, it might be twice as dark for all I should care!"

At this moment a big water rat, who lived in the tunnel, came up.

"Have you a pass?" asked the rat. "Hand up your pass!"

The tin soldier did not speak, but clung still tighter to his gun. The boat rushed on, the rat close behind. Phew, how he gnashed his teeth and shouted to the bits of stick and straw.

"Stop him, stop him, he hasn't paid his toll! he hasn't shown his pass!"

But the current grew stronger and stronger; the tin soldier could already see daylight before him at the end of the tunnel; but he also heard a roaring sound, fit to strike terror to the bravest heart. Just imagine! Where the tunnel ended the stream rushed straight into the big canal. That would be just as dangerous for him as it would be for us to shoot a great rapid.

He was so near the end now that it was impossible to stop. The boat dashed out; the poor tin soldier held himself as stiff as he could; no one should say of him that he even winced.

The boat swirled round three or four times, and filled with water to the edge; it must sink. The tin soldier stood up to his neck in water, and the boat sank deeper and deeper. The paper became limper and limper, and

at last the water went over his head — then he thought of the pretty little dancer, whom he was never to see again, and this refrain rang in his ears: —

"Onward! Onward! Soldier!
For death thou canst not shun."

At last the paper gave way entirely and the soldier fell through — but at the same moment he was swallowed by a big fish.

Oh! how dark it was inside that fish; it was worse than being in the tunnel, even; and then it was so narrow! But the tin soldier was as dauntless as ever, and lay full length, shouldering his gun.

The fish rushed about and made the most frantic movements. At last it became quite quiet, and after a time, a flash like lightning pierced it. The soldier was once more in the broad daylight, and some one called out loudly, "A tin soldier!" The fish had been caught, taken to market, sold, and brought into the kitchen, where the cook cut it open with a large knife. She took the soldier up by the waist, with two fingers, and carried him into the parlor, where every one wanted to see the wonderful man, who had traveled about in the stomach of a fish; but the tin soldier was not at all proud. They set him up on the table, and, wonder of wonders! he found himself in the very same room that he had been in before. He saw the very same children, and the toys were still standing on the table, as well as the beautiful castle with the pretty little dancer.

She still stood on one leg, and held the other up in the air. You see she also was unbending. The soldier was so much moved that he was ready to shed tears of tin, but

that would not have been fitting. He looked at her, and she looked at him, but they said never a word. At this moment one of the little boys took up the tin soldier, and without rime or reason, threw him into the fire. No doubt the little goblin in the snuffbox was to blame for that. The tin soldier stood there, lighted up by the flame, and in the most horrible heat; but whether it was the heat of the real fire, or the warmth of his feelings, he did not know. He had lost all his gay color; it might have been from his perilous journey, or it might have been from grief, who can tell?

He looked at the little maiden, and she looked at him; and he felt that he was melting away, but he still managed to keep himself erect, shouldering his gun bravely.

A door was suddenly opened, the draught caught the little dancer and she fluttered like a sylph, straight into the fire, to the soldier, blazed up and was gone!

By this time the soldier was reduced to a mere lump, and when the maid took away the ashes next morning she found him, in the shape of a small tin heart. All that was left of the dancer was her spangle, and that was burnt as black as a coal.

MISS YOUGHAL'S SAIS

By Rudyard Kipling

When Man and Woman are agreed, what can the Kazi do?
— Proverb.

Some people say that there is no romance in India. Those people are wrong. Our lives hold quite as much romance as is good for us. Sometimes more.

Strickland was in the Police, and people did not understand him; so they said he was a doubtful sort of man and passed by on the other side. Strickland had himself to thank for this. He held the extraordinary theory that a Policeman in India should try to know as much about the natives as the natives themselves. Now, in the whole of Upper India, there is only one man who can pass for Hindu or Mohammedan, hide-dresser or priest, as he pleases. He is feared and respected by the natives from the Ghor Kathri to the Jamma Musjid; and he is supposed to have the gift of invisibility and executive control over many Devils. But this has done him no good in the eyes of the Indian Government.

Strickland was foolish enough to take that man for his model; and, following out his absurd theory, dabbled in unsavory places no respectable man would think of exploring — all among the native riff-raff. He educated himself in this peculiar way for seven years, and peopl

could not appreciate it. He was perpetually "going Fantee" among natives, which, of course, no man with any sense believes in. He was initiated into the *Sat Bhai* at Allahabad once, when he was on leave; he knew the Lizzard-Song of the Sansis, and the *Hálli-Hukk* dance, which is a religious can-can of a startling kind. When a man knows who dance the *Hálli-Hukk*, and how, and when, and where, he knows something to be proud of. He has gone deeper than the skin. But Strickland was not proud, though he had helped once, at Jagadhri, at the Painting of the Death Bull, which no Englishman must even look upon; had mastered the thieves'-patter of the *chángars;* had taken a Eusufzai horse-thief alone near Attock; and had stood under the sounding-board of a Border mosque and conducted service in the manner of a Sunni Molloh.

His crowning achievement was spending eleven days as a *faquir* or priest in the gardens of Baba Atal at Amritsar, and there picking up the threads of the great Nasiban Murder Case. But people said, justly enough, "Why on earth can't Strickland sit in his office and write up his diary, and recruit, and keep quiet, instead of showing up the incapacity of his seniors?" So the Nasiban Murder Case did him no good departmentally; but, after his first feeling of wrath, he returned to his outlandish custom of prying into native life. When a man once acquires a taste for this particular amusement, it abides with him all his days. It is the most fascinating thing in the world; Love not excepted. Where other men took ten days to the Hills, Strickland took leave for what he called *shikar*, put on the disguise that appealed to him at the time, stepped down into the brown crowd, and was swallowed

up for a while. He was a quiet, dark young fellow — spare, black-eyed — and, when he was not thinking of something else, a very interesting companion. Strickland on Native Progress as he had seen it was worth hearing. Natives hated Strickland; but they were afraid of him. He knew too much.

When the Youghals came into the station, Strickland — very gravely, as he did everything — fell in love with Miss Youghal; and she, after a while, fell in love with him because she could not understand him. Then Strickland told the parents; but Mrs. Youghal said she was not going to throw her daughter into the worst paid Department in the Empire, and old Youghal said, in so many words, that he mistrusted Strickland's ways and works, and would thank him not to speak or write to his daughter any more. "Very well," said Strickland, for he did not wish to make his lady-love's life a burden. After one long talk with Miss Youghal he dropped the business entirely.

The Youghals went up to Simla in April.

In July Strickland secured three months' leave on "urgent private affairs." He locked up his house — though not a native in the Province would wittingly have touched "Estreekin Sahib's" gear for the world — and went down to see a friend of his, an old dyer, at Tarn Taran.

Here all trace of him was lost, until a *sais* or groom met me on the Simla Mall with this extraordinary note:

DEAR OLD MAN, — Please give bearer a box of che-roots — Supers, No. 1, for preference. They are freshest at the Club. I'll repay when I reappear; but at present I'm out of society.

Yours,

E. STRICKLAND.

I ordered two boxes, and handed them over to the *sais* with my love. That *sais* was Strickland, and he was in old Youghal's employ, attached to Miss Youghal's Arab. The poor fellow was suffering for an English smoke, and knew that, whatever happened, I should hold my tongue till the business was over.

Later on, Mrs. Youghal, who was wrapped up in her servants, began talking at houses where she called of her paragon among *saises* — the man who was never too busy to get up in the morning and pick flowers for the breakfast-table, and who blacked — actually *blacked* — the hoofs of his horse like a London coachman! The turnout of Miss Youghal's Arab was a wonder and a delight. Strickland — Dulloo, I mean — found his reward in the pretty things that Miss Youghal said to him when she went out riding. Her parents were pleased to find she had forgotten all her foolishness for young Strickland and said she was a good girl.

Strickland vows that the two months of his service were the most rigid mental discipline he has ever gone through. Quite apart from the little fact that the wife of one of his fellow-*saises* fell in love with him and then tried to poison him with arsenic because he would have nothing to do with her, he had to school himself into keeping quiet when Miss Youghal went out riding with some man who tried to flirt with her, and he was forced to trot behind carrying the blanket and hearing every word! Also, he had to keep his temper when he was slanged in the theatre porch by a policeman — especially once when he was abused by a Naik he had himself recruited from Isser village — or, worse still, when a young subaltern called him a pig for not making way quickly enough.

But the life had its compensations. He obtained gre
insight into the ways and thefts of *saises* — enough
says to have summarily convicted half the population of t
Punjab if he had been on business. He became one
the leading players at knuckle-bones, which all *jhampán*
and many *saises* play while they are waiting outside t
Government House or The Gaiety Theatre of nights; a
he heard the wisdom of the grizzled Jemadar of the Go
ernment House grooms. Whose words are valuable.
saw many things which amused him; and he states,
honor, that no man can appreciate Simla properly, till
has seen it from the *sais's* point of view. He also says tha
if he chose to write all he saw, his head would be broke
in several places.

Strickland's account of the agony he endured on w
nights, hearing the music and seeing the lights in "Be
more" with his toes tingling for a waltz and his head
a horse-blanket, is rather amusing. One of these da
Strickland is going to write a little book on his experience
That book will be worth buying; and even more wort
suppressing.

Thus, he served faithfully as Jacob served for Rache
and his leave was nearly at an end when the explosio
came. He had really done his best to keep his temper
the hearing of the flirtations I have mentioned; but
broke down at last. An old and very distinguishe
General took Miss Youghal for a ride, and began tha
specially offensive "you're-only-a-little-girl" sort
flirtation — most difficult for a woman to turn aside deftl
and most maddening to listen to. Miss Youghal wa
shaking with fear at the things he said in the hearing
her *sais*. Dulloo — Strickland — stood it as long as

could. Then he caught hold of the General's bridle, and, in most fluent English, invited him to step off and be flung over the cliff. Next minute, Miss Youghal began to cry; and Strickland saw that he had hopelessly given himself away, and everything was over.

The General nearly had a fit, while Miss Youghal was sobbing out the story of the disguise and the engagement that was not recognized by the parents. Strickland was furiously angry with himself, and more angry with the General for forcing his hand; so he said nothing, but held the horse's head and prepared to thrash the General as some sort of satisfaction. But when the General had thoroughly grasped the story, and knew who Strickland was, he began to puff and blow in the saddle, and nearly rolled off with laughing. He said Strickland deserved a V. C., if it were only for putting on a *sais's* blanket. Then he complimented Miss Youghal on her lover. Then he laughed again, and said that old Youghal was a fool. Strickland let go of the cob's head, and suggested that the General had better help them, if that was his opinion. Strickland knew Youghal's weakness for men with titles and letters after their names and high official position. "It's rather like a forty-minute farce," said the General, "but, begad, I *will* help. Go along to your home, my *saispoliceman*, and change into decent kit, and I'll attack Mr. Youghal. Miss Youghal, may I ask you to canter home and wait?"

* * * * * * *

About seven minutes later, there was a wild hurroosh at the Club. A *sais*, with blanket and headrobe, was asking all the men he knew: "For Heaven's sake lend me decent clothes!" As the men did not recognize him, there were

some peculiar scenes before Strickland could get a hot bath, with soda in it, in one room, a shirt here, a collar there, a pair of trousers elsewhere, and so on. He galloped off, with half the Club wardrobe on his back, and an utter stranger's pony under him, to the house of old Youghal. The General, arrayed in purple and fine linen, was before him. What the General had said Strickland never knew, but Youghal received Strickland with moderate civility; and Mrs. Youghal, touched by the devotion of the transformed Dulloo, was almost kind. The General beamed and chuckled, and Miss Youghal came in, and, almost before old Youghal knew where he was, the parental consent had been wrenched out, and Strickland had departed with Youghal to the Telegraph Office to wire for his European kit. The final embarrassment was when a stranger attacked him on the Mall and asked for the stolen pony.

In the end, Strickland and Miss Youghal were married, on the strict understanding that Strickland should drop his old ways, and stick to Departmental routine, which pays best and leads to Simla. Strickland was far too fond of his wife, just then, to break his word, but it was a sore trial to him; for the streets and the bazars, and the sounds in them, were full of meaning to Strickland, and these called to him to come back and take up his wanderings and his discoveries. Some day, I will tell you how he broke his promise, to help a friend. That was long since, and he has, by this time, been nearly spoiled for what he would call *shikar*. He is forgetting the slang, and the beggar's cant, and the marks and the signs, and the drift of the undercurrents, which, if a man would master, he must always continue to learn.

But he fills in his Departmental returns beautifully.

THE SIRE DE MALÉTROIT'S DOOR

By Robert Louis Stevenson

Denis de Beaulieu was not yet two-and-twenty, but he counted himself a grown man, and a very accomplished cavalier into the bargain. Lads were early formed in that rough, warfaring epoch; and when one has been in a pitched battle and a dozen raids, has killed one's man in an honorable fashion, and knows a thing or two of strategy and mankind, a certain swagger in the gait is surely to be pardoned. He had put up his horse with due care, and supped with due deliberation; and then, in a very agreeable frame of mind, went out to pay a visit in the gray of the evening. It was not a very wise proceeding on the young man's part. He would have done better to remain beside the fire or go decently to bed. For the town was full of the troops of Burgundy and England under a mixed command; and though Denis was there on safe-conduct, his safe-conduct was like to serve him little on a chance encounter.

It was September, 1429; the weather had fallen sharp; a flighty piping wind, laden with showers, beat about the township; and the dead leaves ran riot along the streets. Here and there a window was already lighted up; and the noise of men-at-arms making merry over supper within, came forth in fits and was swallowed up and carried away

by the wind. The night fell swiftly; the flag of England, fluttering on the spire-top, grew ever fainter and fainter against the flying clouds — a black speck like a swallow in the tumultuous, leaden chaos of the sky. As the night fell the wind rose, and began to hoot under archways and roar amid the tree-tops in the valley below the town.

Denis de Beaulieu walked fast and was soon knocking at his friend's door; but though he promised himself to stay only a little while and make an early return, his welcome was so pleasant, and he found so much to delay him, that it was already long past midnight before he said goodbye upon the threshold. The wind had fallen again in the meanwhile; the night was as black as the grave; not a star, nor a glimmer of moonshine, slipped through the canopy of cloud. Denis was ill-acquainted with the intricate lanes of Chateau Landon; even by daylight he had found some trouble in picking his way; and in this absolute darkness he soon lost it altogether. He was certain of one thing only — to keep mounting the hill; for his friend's house lay at the lower end, or tail, of Chateau Landon, while the inn was up at the head, under the great church spire. With this clue to go upon he stumbled and groped forward, now breathing more freely in open places where there was a good slice of sky overhead, now feeling along the wall in stifling closes. It is an eerie and mysterious position to be thus submerged in opaque blackness in an almost unknown town. The silence is terrifying in its possibilities. The touch of cold window-bars to the exploring hand startles the man like the touch of a toad; the inequalities of the pavement shake his heart into his mouth; a piece of denser darkness threatens

an ambuscade or a chasm in the pathway; and where the air is brighter, the houses put on strange and bewildering appearances, as if to lead him farther from his way. For Denis, who had to regain his inn without attracting notice there was real danger as well as mere discomfort in the walk; and he went warily and boldly at once, and at every corner paused to make an observation.

He had been for some time threading a lane so narrow that he could touch a wall with either hand when it began to open out and go sharply downward. Plainly this lay no longer in the direction of his inn; but the hope of a little more light tempted him forward to reconnoitre. The lane ended in a terrace with a bartizan wall, which gave an outlook between high houses, as out of an embrasure, into the valley lying dark and formless several hundred feet below. Denis looked down, and could discern a few tree-tops waving and a single speck of brightness where the river ran across a weir. The weather was clearing up, and the sky had lightened, so as to show the outline of the heavier clouds and the dark margin of the hills. By the uncertain glimmer, the house on his left hand should be a place of some pretensions; it was surmounted by several pinnacles and turret-tops; the round stern of a chapel, with a fringe of flying buttresses, projected boldly from the main block; and the door was sheltered under a deep porch carved with figures and overhung by two long gargoyles. The windows of the chapel gleamed through their intricate tracery with a light as of many tapers, and threw out the buttresses and the peaked roof in a more intense blackness against the sky. It was plainly the hotel of some great family of the neighborhood; and as it reminded Denis of a town house of his own at Bourges, he stood for some time gazing

up at it and mentally gauging the skill of the architects and the consideration of the two families.

There seemed to be no issue to the terrace but the lane by which he had reached it; he could only retrace his steps, but he had gained some notion of his whereabouts, and hoped by this means to hit the main thoroughfare and speedily regain the inn. He was reckoning without that chapter of accidents which was to make this night memorable above all others in his career; for he had not gone back above a hundred yards before he saw a light coming to meet him, and heard loud voices speaking together in the echoing narrows of the lane. It was a party of men-at-arms going the night round with torches. Denis assured himself that they had all been making free with the wine-bowl, and were in no mood to be particular about safe-conducts or the niceties of chivalrous war. It was as like as not that they would kill him like a dog and leave him where he fell. The situation was inspiriting but nervous. Their own torches would conceal him from sight, he reflected; and he hoped that they would drown the noise of his footsteps with their own empty voices. If he were but fleet and silent, he might evade their notice altogether.

Unfortunately, as he turned to beat a retreat, his foot rolled upon a pebble; he fell against the wall with an ejaculation, and his sword rang loudly on the stones. Two or three voices demanded who went there — some in French, some in English; but Denis made no reply, and ran the faster down the lane. Once upon the terrace, he paused to look back. They still kept calling after him, and just then began to double the pace in pursuit, with a considerable clank of armour, and great tossing of the torchlight to and fro in the narrow jaws of the passage.

Denis cast a look around and darted into the porch. There he might escape observation, or — if that were too much to expect — was in a capital posture whether for parley or defence. So thinking, he drew his sword and tried to set his back against the door. To his surprise, it yielded behind his weight; and though he turned in a moment, continued to swing back on oiled and noiseless hinges, until it stood wide open on a black interior. When things fall out opportunely for the person concerned, he is not apt to be critical about the how or why, his own immediate personal convenience seeming a sufficient reason for the strange oddities and revolutions in our sublunary things; and so Denis, without a moment's hesitation, stepped within and partly closed the door behind him to conceal his place of refuge. Nothing was further from his thoughts than to close it altogether; but for some inexplicable reason — perhaps by a spring or a weight — the ponderous mass of oak whipped itself out of his fingers and clanked to, with a formidable rumble and a noise like the falling of an automatic bar.

The round, at that very moment, debouched upon the terrace and proceeded to summon him with shouts and curses. He heard them ferreting in the dark corners; the stock of a lance even rattled along the outer surface of the door behind which he stood; but these gentlemen were in too high a humor to be long delayed, and soon made off down a corkscrew pathway which had escaped Denis's observation, and passed out of sight and hearing along the battlements of the town.

Denis breathed again. He gave them a few minutes' grace for fear of accidents, and then groped about for some means of opening the door and slipping forth again.

The inner surface was quite smooth, not a handle, not a moulding, not a projection of any sort. He got his finger-nails round the edges and pulled, but the mass was immovable. He shook it, it was as firm as a rock. Denis de Beaulieu frowned and gave vent to a little noiseless whistle. What ailed the door? he wondered. Why was it open? How came it to shut so easily and so effectually after him? There was something obscure and under-hand about all this, that was little to the young man's fancy. It looked like a snare; and yet who could suppose a snare in such a quiet by-street and in a house of so prosperous and even noble an exterior? And yet — snare or no snare, intentionally or unintentionally — here he was, prettily trapped; and for the life of him he could see no way out of it again. The darkness began to weigh upon him. He gave ear; all was silence without, but within and close by he seemed to catch a faint sighing, a faint sobbing rustle, a little stealthy creak — as though many persons were at his side, holding themselves quite still, and governing even their respiration with the extreme of slyness. The idea went to his vitals with a shock, and he faced about suddenly as if to defend his life. Then, for the first time, he became aware of a light about the level of his eyes and at some distance in the interior of the house — a vertical thread of light, widening towards the bottom, such as might escape between two wings of arras over a doorway. To see anything was a relief to Denis; it was like a piece of solid ground to a man labouring in a morass; his mind seized upon it with avidity; and he stood staring at it and trying to piece together some logical conception of his surroundings. Plainly there was a flight of steps ascending from his own level to that of this illuminated doorway;

and indeed he thought he could make out another thread of light, as fine as a needle, and as faint as phosphorescence, which might very well be reflected along the polished wood of a handrail. Since he had begun to suspect that he was not alone, his heart had continued to beat with smothering violence, and an intolerable desire for action of any sort had possessed itself of his spirit. He was in deadly peril, he believed. What could be more natural than to mount the staircase, lift the curtain, and confront his difficulty at once? At least he would be dealing with something tangible; at least he would be no longer in the dark. He stepped slowly forward with outstretched hands, until his foot struck the bottom step; then he rapidly scaled the stairs, stood for a moment to compose his expression, lifted the arras and went in.

He found himself in a large apartment of polished stone. There were three doors; one on each of three sides; all similarly curtained with tapestry. The fourth side was occupied by two large windows and a great stone chimney-piece, carved with the arms of the Malétroits. Denis recognised the bearings, and was gratified to find himself in such good hands. The room was strongly illuminated; but it contained little furniture except a heavy table and a chair or two, the hearth was innocent of fire, and the pavement was but sparsely strewn with rushes clearly many days old.

On a high chair beside the chimney, and directly facing Denis as he entered, sat a little old gentleman in a fur tippet. He sat with his legs crossed and his hands folded, and a cup of spiced wine stood by his elbow on a bracket on the wall. His countenance had a strongly masculine cast; not properly human, but such as we see in the bull,

the goat, or the domestic boar; something equivocal and wheedling, something greedy, brutal, and dangerous. The upper lip was inordinately full, as though swollen by a blow or a toothache; and the smile, the peaked eyebrows, and the small, strong eyes were quaintly and almost comically evil in expression. Beautiful white hair hung straight all round his head, like a saint's, and fell in a single curl upon the tippet. His beard and moustache were the pink of venerable sweetness. Age, probably in consequence of inordinate precautions, had left no mark upon his hands; and the Malétroit hand was famous. It would be difficult to imagine anything at once so fleshy and so delicate in design; the taper, sensual fingers were like those of one of Leonardo's women; the fork of the thumb made a dimpled protuberance when closed; the nails were perfectly shaped, and of a dead, surprising whiteness. It rendered his aspect tenfold more redoubtable, that a man with hands like these should keep them devoutly folded like a virgin martyr — that a man with so intent and startling an expression of face should sit patiently on his seat and contemplate people with an unwinking stare, like a god, or a god's statue. His quiescence seemed ironical and treacherous, it fitted so poorly with his looks.

Such was Alain, Sire de Malétroit.

Denis and he looked silently at each other for a second or two.

"Pray step in," said the Sire de Malétroit. "I have been expecting you all the evening."

He had not risen, but he accompanied his words with a smile and a slight but courteous inclination of the head. Partly from the smile, partly from the strange musical murmur with which the Sire prefaced his observation,

Denis felt a strong shudder of disgust go through his marrow. And what with disgust and honest confusion of mind, he could scarcely get words together in reply.

"I fear," he said, "that this is a double accident. I am not the person you suppose me. It seems you were looking for a visit; but for my part, nothing was further from my thoughts — nothing could be more contrary to my wishes — than this intrusion."

"Well, well," replied the old gentleman indulgently, "here you are, which is the main point. Seat yourself, my friend, and put yourself entirely at your ease. We shall arrange our little affairs presently."

Denis perceived that the matter was still complicated with some misconception, and he hastened to continue his explanations.

"Your door . . ." he began.

"About my door?" asked the other, raising his peaked eyebrows. "A little piece of ingenuity." And he shrugged his shoulders. "A hospitable fancy! By your own account, you were not desirous of making my acquaintance. We old people look for such reluctance now and then; when it touches our honor, we cast about until we find some way of overcoming it. You arrive uninvited, but believe me, very welcome."

"You persist in error, Sir," said Denis. "There can be no question between you and me. I am a stranger in this country-side. My name is Denis, damoiseau de Beaulieu. If you see me in your house, it is only ——"

"My young friend," interrupted the other, "you will permit me to have my own ideas on that subject. They probably differ from yours at the present moment," he added with a leer, "but time will show which of us is in the right."

Denis was convinced he had to do with a lunatic. He seated himself with a shrug, content to wait the upshot; and a pause ensued, during which he thought he could distinguish a hurried gabbling as of prayer from behind the arras immediately opposite him. Sometimes there seemed to be but one person engaged, sometimes two; and the vehemence of the voice, low as it was, seemed to indicate either great haste or an agony of spirit. It occurred to him that this piece of tapestry covered the entrance to the chapel he had noticed from without.

The old gentleman meanwhile surveyed Denis from head to foot with a smile, and from time to time emitted little noises like a bird or a mouse, which seemed to indicate a high degree of satisfaction. This state of matters became rapidly insupportable; and Denis, to put an end to it, remarked politely that the wind had gone down.

The old gentleman fell into a fit of silent laughter, so prolonged and violent that he became quite red in the face. Denis got upon his feet at once, and put on his hat with a flourish.

"Sir," he said, "if you are in your wits, you have affronted me grossly. If you are out of them, I flatter myself I can find better employment for my brains than to talk with lunatics. My conscience is clear; you have made a fool of me from the first moment; you have refused to hear my explanations; and now there is no power under God will make me stay here any longer; and if I cannot make my way out in a more decent fashion, I will hack your door in pieces with my sword."

The Sire de Malétroit raised his right hand and wagged it at Denis with the fore and little fingers extended.

"My dear nephew," he said, "sit down."

"Nephew!" retorted Denis, "you lie in your throat"; and he snapped his fingers in his face.

"Sit down, you rogue!" cried the old gentleman, in a sudden, harsh voice, like the barking of a dog. "Do you fancy," he went on, "that when I had made my little contrivance for the door I had stopped short with that? If you prefer to be bound hand and foot till your bones ache, rise and try to go away. If you choose to remain a free young buck, agreeably conversing with an old gentleman — why, sit where you are in peace, and God be with you."

"Do you mean I am a prisoner?" demanded Denis.

"I state the facts," replied the other. "I would rather leave the conclusion to yourself."

Denis sat down again. Externally he managed to keep pretty calm, but within, he was now boiling with anger, now chilled with apprehension. He no longer felt convinced that he was dealing with a madman. And if the old gentleman was sane, what, in God's name, had he to look for? What absurd or tragical adventure had befallen him? What countenance was he to assume?

While he was thus unpleasantly reflecting, the arras that overhung the chapel door was raised, and a tall priest in his robes came forth and, giving a long, keen stare at Denis, said something in an undertone to Sire de Malétroit.

"She is in a better frame of spirit?" asked the latter.

"She is more resigned, messire," replied the priest.

"Now the Lord help her, she is hard to please!" sneered the old gentleman. "A likely stripling — not ill-born — and of her own choosing, too? Why, what more would the jade have?"

"The situation is not usual for a young damsel," said the other, "and somewhat trying to her blushes."

"She should have thought of that before she began the dance. It was none of my choosing, God knows that: but since she is in it, by our lady, she shall carry it to the end." And then addressing Denis, "Monsieur de Beaulieu," he asked, "may I present you to my niece? She has been waiting your arrival, I may say, with even greater impatience than myself."

Denis had resigned himself with a good grace — all he desired was to know the worst of it as speedily as possible; so he rose at once, and bowed in acquiescence. The Sire de Malétroit followed his example and limped, with the assistance of the chaplain's arm, towards the chapel-door. The priest pulled aside the arras, and all three entered. The building had considerable architectural pretensions. A light groining sprang from six stout columns, and hung down in two rich pendants from the centre of the vault. The place terminated behind the altar in a round end, embossed and honeycombed with a superfluity of ornament in relief, and pierced by many little windows shaped like stars, trefoils, or wheels. These windows were imperfectly glazed, so that the night air circulated freely in the chapel. The tapers, of which there must have been half a hundred burning on the altar, were unmercifully blown about; and the light went through many different phases of brilliancy and semi-eclipse. On the steps in front of the altar knelt a young girl richly attired as a bride. A chill settled over Denis as he observed her costume; he fought with desperate energy against the conclusion that was being thrust upon his mind; it could not — it should not — be as he feared.

"Blanche," said the Sire, in his most flute-like tones, "I have brought a friend to see you, my little girl; turn

round and give him your pretty hand. It is good to be devout; but it is necessary to be polite, my niece."

The girl rose to her feet and turned toward the newcomers. She moved all of a piece; and shame and exhaustion were expressed in every line of her fresh young body; and she held her head down and kept her eyes upon the pavement, as she came slowly forward. In the course of her advance, her eyes fell upon Denis de Beaulieu's feet — feet of which he was justly vain, be it remarked, and wore in the most elegant accoutrement even while travelling. She paused — started, as if his yellow boots had conveyed some shocking meaning — and glanced suddenly up into the wearer's countenance. Their eyes met; shame gave place to horror and terror in her looks; the blood left her lips; with a piercing scream she covered her face with her hands and sank upon the chapel floor.

"That is not the man!" she cried. "My uncle, that is not the man!"

The Sire de Malétroit chirped agreeably. "Of course not," he said, "I expected as much. It was so unfortunate you could not remember his name."

"Indeed," she cried, "indeed, I have never seen this person till this moment — I have never so much as set eyes upon him — I never wish to see him again. Sir," she said, turning to Denis, "if you are a gentleman, you will bear me out. Have I ever seen you — have you ever seen me — before this accursed hour?"

"To speak for myself, I have never had that pleasure," answered the young man. "This is the first time, messire, that I have met with your engaging niece."

The old gentleman shrugged his shoulders.

"I am distressed to hear it," he said. "But it is never

too late to begin. I had little more acquaintance with my own late lady ere I married her; which proves," he added, with a grimace, "that these impromptu marriages may often produce an excellent understanding in the long run. As the bridegroom is to have a voice in the matter, I will give him two hours to make up for lost time before we proceed with the ceremony." And he turned toward the door, followed by the clergyman.

The girl was on her feet in a moment. "My uncle, you cannot be in earnest," she said. "I declare before God I will stab myself rather than be forced on that young man. The heart rises at it; God forbids such marriages; you dishonor your white hair. Oh, my uncle, pity me! There is not a woman in all the world but would prefer death to such a nuptial. Is it possible," she added, faltering — "is it possible that you do not believe me — that you still think this" — and she pointed at Denis with a tremor of anger and contempt — "that you still think *this* to be the man?"

"Frankly," said the old gentleman, pausing on the threshold, "I do. But let me explain to you once for all, Blanche de Malétroit, my way of thinking about this affair. When you took it into your head to dishonor my family and the name that I have borne, in peace and war, for more than three-score years, you forfeited, not only the right to question my designs, but that of looking me in the face. If your father had been alive, he would have spat on you and turned you out of doors. His was the hand of iron. You may bless your God you have only to deal with the hand of velvet, mademoiselle. It was my duty to get you married without delay. Out of pure good-will, I have tried to find your own gallant for you

and I believe I have succeeded. But before God and all the holy angels, Blanche de Malétroit, if I have not, I care not one jack-straw. So let me recommend you to be polite to our young friend; for upon my word, your next groom may be less appetising."

And with that he went out, with the chaplain at his heels; and the arras fell behind the pair.

The girl turned upon Denis with flashing eyes.

"And what, sir," she demanded, "may be the meaning of all this?"

"God knows," returned Denis, gloomily. "I am a prisoner in this house, which seems full of mad people. More I know not; and nothing do I understand."

"And pray how came you here?" she asked.

He told her as briefly as he could. "For the rest," he added, "perhaps you will follow my example, and tell me the answer to all these riddles, and what, in God's name, is like to be the end of it."

She stood silent for a little, and he could see her lips tremble and her tearless eyes burn with a feverish lustre. Then she pressed her forehead in both hands.

"Alas, how my head aches!" she said wearily — "to say nothing of my poor heart! But it is due to you to know my story, unmaidenly as it must seem. I am called Blanche de Malétroit; I have been without father or mother for — oh! for as long as I can recollect, and indeed I have been most unhappy all my life. Three months ago a young captain began to stand near me every day in church. I could see that I pleased him; I am much to blame, but I was so glad that any one should love me; and when he passed me a letter, I took it home with me and read it with great pleasure. Since that time he has

written many. He was so anxious to speak with me, poo fellow! and kept asking me to leave the door open som evening that we might have two words upon the stai For he knew how much my uncle trusted me." She gav something like a sob at that, and it was a moment befor she could go on. "My uncle is a hard man, but he is ver shrewd," she said at last. "He has performed man feats in war, and was a great person at court, and muc trusted by Queen Isabeau in old days. How he came t suspect me I cannot tell; but it is hard to keep anythin from his knowledge; and this morning, as we came fron mass, he took my hand into his, forced it open, and rea my little billet, walking by my side all the while. Whe he finished, he gave it back to me with great politeness It contained another request to have the door left open and this has been the ruin of us all. My uncle kept m strictly in my room until evening, and then ordered m to dress myself as you see me — a hard mockery for young girl, do you not think so? I suppose, when he coul not prevail with me to tell him the young captain's name he must have laid a trap for him: into which, alas! yo have fallen in the anger of God. I looked for much con fusion; for how could I tell whether he was willing to tak me for his wife on these sharp terms? He might have been trifling with me from the first; or I might have made myself too cheap in his eyes. But truly I had no looked for such a shameful punishment as this! I coul not think that God would let a girl be so disgraced before a young man. And now I tell you all; and I can scarcely hope that you will not despise me."

Denis made her a respectful inclination.

"Madam," he said, "you have honored me by you

confidence. It remains for me to prove that I am not unworthy of the honor. Is Messire de Malétroit at hand?"

"I believe he is writing in the salle without," she answered.

"May I lead you thither, madam?" asked Denis, offering his hand with his most courtly bearing.

She accepted it; and the pair passed out of the chapel, Blanche in a very drooping and shamefast condition, but Denis strutting and ruffling in the consciousness of a mission, and the boyish certainty of accomplishing it with honor.

The Sire de Malétroit rose to meet them with an ironical obeisance.

"Sir," said Denis, with the grandest possible air, "I believe I am to have some say in the matter of this marriage; and let me tell you at once, I will be no party to forcing the inclination of this young lady. Had it been freely offered to me, I should have been proud to accept her hand, for I perceive she is as good as she is beautiful; but as things are, I have now the honor, messire, of refusing."

Blanche looked at him with gratitude in her eyes; but the old gentleman only smiled and smiled, until his smile grew positively sickening to Denis.

"I am afraid," he said, "Monsieur de Beaulieu, that you do not perfectly understand the choice I have offered you. Follow me, I beseech you, to this window." And he led the way to one of the large windows which stood open on the night. "You observe," he went on, "there is an iron ring in the upper masonry, and reeved through that, a very efficacious rope. Now, mark my words: if

you should find your disinclination to my niece's person insurmountable, I shall have you hanged out of this window before sunrise. I shall only proceed to such an extremity with the greatest regret, you may believe me. For it is not at all your death that I desire, but my niece's establishment in life. At the same time, it must come to that if you prove obstinate. Your family, Monsieur de Beaulieu, is very well in its way; but if you sprang from Charlemagne, you should not refuse the hand of a Malétroit with impunity — not if she had been as common as the Paris road — not if she were as hideous as the gargoyle over my door. Neither my niece nor you, nor my own private feelings, move me at all in this matter. The honor of my house has been compromised; I believe you to be the guilty person, at least you are now in the secret; and you can hardly wonder if I request you to wipe out the stain. If you will not, your blood be on your own head! It will be no great satisfaction to me to have your interesting relics kicking their heels in the breeze below my windows, but half a loaf is better than no bread, and if I cannot cure the dishonor, I shall at least stop the scandal."

There was a pause.

"I believe there are other ways of settling such imbroglios among gentlemen," said Denis. "You wear a sword, and I hear you have used it with distinction."

The Sire de Malétroit made a signal to the chaplain, who crossed the room with long silent strides and raised the arras over the third of the three doors. It was only a moment before he let it fall again; but Denis had time to see a dusky passage full of armed men.

"When I was a little younger, I should have been delighted to honor you, Monsieur de Beaulieu," said Sire

Alain; "but I am now too old. Faithful retainers are the sinews of age, and I must employ the strength I have. This is one of the hardest things to swallow as a man grows up in years; but with a little patience, even this becomes habitual. You and the lady seem to prefer the salle for what remains of your two hours; and as I have no desire to cross your preference, I shall resign it to your use with all the pleasure in the world. No haste!" he added, holding up his hand, as he saw a dangerous look come into Denis de Beaulieu's face. "If your mind revolt against hanging, it will be time enough two hours hence to throw yourself out of the window or upon the pikes of my retainers. Two hours of life are always two hours. A great many things may turn up in even as little a while as that. And, besides, if I understand her appearance, my niece has something to say to you. You will not disfigure your last hours by a want of politeness to a lady?"

Denis looked at Blanche, and she made him an imploring gesture.

It is likely that the old gentleman was hugely pleased at this symptom of an understanding; for he smiled on both, and added sweetly: "If you will give me your word of honor, Monsieur de Beaulieu, to await my return at the end of the two hours before attempting anything desperate, I shall withdraw my retainers, and let you speak in greater privacy with mademoiselle."

Denis again glanced at the girl, who seemed to beseech him to agree.

"I give you my word of honor," he said.

Messire de Malétroit bowed, and proceeded to limp about the apartment, clearing his throat the while with that odd musical chirp which had already grown so irritat-

ing in the ears of Denis de Beaulieu. He first possesse himself of some papers which lay upon the table; then h went to the mouth of the passage and appeared to giv an order to the men behind the arras; and lastly h hobbled out through the door by which Denis had come in turning upon the threshold to address a last smiling bow to the young couple, and followed by the chaplain with a hand-lamp.

No sooner were they alone than Blanche advanced towards Denis with her hands extended. Her face was flushed and excited, and her eyes shone with tears.

"You shall not die!" she cried, "you shall marry me after all."

"You seem to think, madam," replied Denis, "that I stand much in fear of death."

"Oh, no, no," she said, "I see you are no poltroon. It is for my own sake — I could not bear to have you slain for such a scruple."

"I am afraid," returned Denis, "that you underrate the difficulty, madam. What you may be too generous to refuse, I may be too proud to accept. In a moment of noble feeling towards me, you forgot what you perhaps owe to others."

He had the decency to keep his eyes on the floor as he said this, and after he had finished, so as not to spy upon her confusion. She stood silent for a moment, then walked suddenly away, and falling on her uncle's chair, fairly burst out sobbing. Denis was in the acme of embarrassment. He looked round, as if to seek for inspiration, and seeing a stool, plumped down upon it for something to do. There he sat playing with the guard of his rapier, and wishing himself dead a thousand times over, and buried

in the nastiest kitchen-heap in France. His eyes wandered round the apartment, but found nothing to arrest them. There were such wide spaces between the furniture, the light fell so badly and cheerlessly over all, the dark outside air looked in so coldly through the windows that he thought he had never seen a church so vast, nor a tomb so melancholy. The regular sobs of Blanche de Malétroit measured out the time like the ticking of a clock. He read the device upon the shield over and over again, until his eyes became obscured; he stared into shadowy corners until he imagined they were swarming with horrible animals; and every now and again he awoke with a start, to remember that his last two hours were running, and death was on the march.

Oftener and oftener, as the time went on, did his glance settle on the girl herself. Her face was bowed forward and covered with her hands, and she was shaken at intervals by the convulsive hiccup of grief. Even thus she was not an unpleasant object to dwell upon, so plump and yet so fine, with a warm brown skin, and the most beautiful hair, Denis thought, in the whole world of womankind. Her hands were like her uncle's; but they were more in place at the end of her young arms, and looked infinitely soft and caressing. He remembered how her blue eyes had shone upon him, full of anger, pity, and innocence. And the more he dwelt on her perfections, the uglier death looked, and the more deeply was he smitten with penitence at her continued tears. Now he felt that no man could have the courage to leave a world which contained so beautiful a creature; and now he would have given forty minutes of his last hour to have unsaid his cruel speech.

Suddenly a hoarse and ragged peal of cockcrow rose

to their ears from the dark valley below the windows. And this shattering noise in the silence of all around was like a light in a dark place, and shook them both out of their reflections.

"Alas, can I do nothing to help you?" she said, looking up.

"Madam," replied Denis, with a fine irrelevancy, "if I have said anything to wound you, believe me, it was for your own sake and not for mine."

She thanked him with a tearful look.

"I feel your position cruelly," he went on. "The world has been bitter hard on you. Your uncle is a disgrace to mankind. Believe me, madam, there is no young gentleman in all France but would be glad of my opportunity, to die in doing you a momentary service."

"I know already that you can be very brave and generous," she answered. "What I *want* to know is whether I can serve you — now or afterwards," she added, with a quaver.

"Most certainly," he answered with a smile. "Let me sit beside you as if I were a friend, instead of a foolish intruder; try to forget how awkwardly we are placed to one another; make my last moments go pleasantly; and you will do me the chief service possible."

"You are very gallant," she added, with a yet deeper sadness . . . "very gallant . . . and it somehow pains me. But draw nearer, if you please; and if you find anything to say to me, you will at least make certain of a very friendly listener. Ah! Monsieur de Beaulieu," she broke forth — "ah! Monsieur de Beaulieu, how can I look you in the face?" And she fell to weeping again with a renewed effusion.

"Madam," said Denis, taking her hand in both of his, "reflect on the little time I have before me, and the great bitterness into which I am cast by the sight of your distress. Spare me, in my last moments, the spectacle of what I cannot cure even with the sacrifice of my life."

"I am very selfish," answered Blanche. "I will be braver, Monsieur de Beaulieu, for your sake. But think if I can do you no kindness in the future — if you have no friends to whom I could carry your adieux. Charge me as heavily as you can; every burthen will lighten, by so little, the invaluable gratitude I owe you. Put it in my power to do something more for you than weep."

"My mother is married again, and has a young family to care for. My brother Guichard will inherit my fiefs; and if I am not in error, that will content him amply for my death. Life is a little vapor that passeth away, as we are told by those in holy orders. When a man is in a fair way and sees all life open in front of him, he seems to himself to make a very important figure in the world. His horse whinnies to him; the trumpets blow and the girls look out of window as he rides into town before his company; he receives many assurances of trust and regard — sometimes by express in a letter — sometimes face to face, with persons of great consequence falling on his neck. It is not wonderful if his head is turned for a time. But once he is dead, were he as brave as Hercules or as wise as Solomon, he is soon forgotten. It is not ten years since my father fell, with many other knights around him, in a very fierce encounter, and I do not think that any one of them, nor so much as the name of the fight, is now remembered. No, no, madam, the nearer you come to it, you see that death is a dark and dusty corner, where a

man gets into his tomb and has the door shut after him till the Judgment Day. I have few friends just now, and once I am dead I shall have none."

"Ah, Monsieur de Beaulieu!" she exclaimed, "you forget Blanche de Malétroit."

"You have a sweet nature, madam, and you are pleased to estimate a little service far beyond its worth."

"It is not that," she answered. "You mistake me if you think I am easily touched by my own concerns. I say so, because you are the noblest man I have ever met; because I recognise in you a spirit that would have made even a common person famous in the land."

"And yet here I die in a mousetrap — with no more noise about it than my own speaking," answered he.

A look of pain crossed her face, and she was silent for a little while. Then a light came into her eyes, and with a smile she spoke again.

"I cannot have my champion think meanly of himself. Any one who gives his life for another will be met in Paradise by all the heralds and angels of the Lord God. And you have no such cause to hang your head. For . . . pray, do you think me beautiful?" she asked, with a deep flush.

"Indeed, madam, I do," he said.

"I am glad of that," she answered heartily. "Do you think there are many men in France who have been asked in marriage by a beautiful maiden — with her own lips — and who have refused her to her face? I know you men would half despise such a triumph; but believe me, we women know more of what is precious in love. There is nothing that should set a person higher in his own esteem; and we women would prize nothing more dearly."

"You are very good," he said; "but you cannot make me forget that I was asked in pity and not for love."

"I am not so sure of that," she replied, holding down her head. "Hear me to an end, Monsieur de Beaulieu. I know how you must despise me; I feel you are right to do so; I am too poor a creature to occupy one thought of your mind, although, alas! you must die for me this morning. But when I asked you to marry me, indeed, and indeed, it was because I respected and admired you, and loved you with my whole soul, from the very moment that you took my part against my uncle. If you had seen yourself, and how noble you looked, you would pity rather than despise me. And now," she went on, hurriedly checking him with her hand, "although I have laid aside all reserve and told you so much, remember that I know your sentiments towards me already. I would not, believe me, being nobly born, weary you with importunities into consent. I too have a pride of my own: and I declare before the holy mother of God, if you should now go back from your word already given, I would no more marry you than I would marry my uncle's groom."

Denis smiled a little bitterly.

"It is a small love," he said, "that shies at a little pride."

She made no answer, although she probably had her own thoughts.

"Come hither to the window," he said with a sigh. "Here is the dawn."

And indeed the dawn was already beginning. The hollow of the sky was full of essential daylight, colorless and clean; and the valley underneath was flooded with a grey reflection. A few thin vapors clung in the coves of the forest or lay along the winding course of the river.

The scene disengaged a surprising effect of stillness, whi
was hardly interrupted when the cocks began once mo
to crow among the steadings. Perhaps the same fello
who had made so horrid a clangor in the darkness n
half an hour before, now sent up the merriest cheer
greet the coming day. A little wind went bustling a
eddying among the tree-tops underneath the windo
And still the daylight kept flooding insensibly out of t
east, which was soon to grow incandescent and cast
that red-hot cannon-ball, the rising sun.

Denis looked out over all this with a bit of a shiv
He had taken her hand, and retained it in his almost u
consciously.

"Has the day begun already?" she said; and the
illogically enough: "the night has been so long! Ala
what shall we say to my uncle when he returns?"

"What you will," said Denis, and he pressed her finge
in his.

She was silent.

"Blanche," he said, with a swift, uncertain, passiona
utterance, "you have seen whether I fear death. Y
must know well enough that I would as gladly leap out
that window into the empty air as to lay a finger on y
without your free and full consent. But if you care for
at all, do not let me lose my life in a misapprehensio
for I love you better than the whole world; and though
will die for you blithely, it would be like all the joys
Paradise to live on and spend my life in your service."

As he stopped speaking, a bell began to ring loudly
the interior of the house; and a clatter of armor in t
corridor showed that the retainers were returning to th
post, and the two hours were at an end.

"After all that you have heard?" she whispered, leaning towards him with her lips and eyes.

"I have heard nothing," he replied.

"The captain's name was Florimond de Champdivers," he said in his ear.

"I did not hear it," he answered, taking her supple body in his arms, and covering her wet face with kisses.

A melodious chirping was audible behind, followed by a beautiful chuckle, and the voice of Messire de Malétroit wished his new nephew a good-morning.

THE REVOLUTION AT SATAN'S TRAP[1]

By Norman Duncan

Jehoshaphat Rudd of Satan's Trap was shy; abl
bodied, to be sure, if a gigantic frame means anything, ar
mature, if a family of nine is competent evidence, but st
as shy as a child. Moreover, he had the sad habit
anxiety: whence tense eyelids, an absent, poignant gaz
a perpetual pucker between the brows. His face w
brown and big, framed in tawny, soft hair and beard, ar
spread with a delicate web of wrinkles, spun by the weath
— a round countenance, simple, kindly, apathetic. Th
wind had inflamed the whites of his eyes and turned th
rims blood-red; but the wells in the midst were deep ar
clear and cool. Reserve, courageous and methodic
diligence at the fishing, a quick, tremulous concern upo
salutation — by these signs the folk of his harbor ha
long ago been persuaded that he was a fool; and a fool h
was, according to the convention of the Newfoundlan
outports — a shy, dull fellow, whose interests were co
fined to his punt, his gear, the grounds off the Tombston
and the bellies of his young ones. He had no part with th
disputations of Satan's Trap; no voice, for example, i

[1] In "Every Man for Himself." Harper and Brothers, N. Y., 190
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and the author.

he rancorous discussions of the purposes and ways of he Lord God Almighty, believing the purposes to be wise nd kind, and the ways the Lord's own business. He was hy, anxious. and preoccupied; wherefore he was called fool, and made no answer: for doubtless he *was* a fool. And what did it matter? He would fare neither better nor worse.

Nor would Jehoshaphat wag a tongue with the public-pirited men of Satan's Trap: the times and the customs had no interest, no significance, for him; he was troubled with his own concerns. Old John Wull, the trader, with whom (and no other) the folk might barter their fish, personified all the abuses, as a matter of course. But —

"I 'low I 'm too busy t' think," Jehoshaphat would reply uneasily. "I 'm too busy. I—I—why, I got t' end my *fish!*"

This was the quality of his folly.

It chanced one summer dawn, however, when the sky was flushed with tender light, and the shadows were troop-ng westward, and the sea was placid, that the punts of Timothy Yule and Jehoshaphat Rudd went side by side to the Tombstone grounds. It was dim and very still upon the water, and solemn, too, in that indifferent vastness between the gloom and the rosy, swelling light. Satan's Trap lay behind in the shelter and shadow of great hills laid waste, a lean, impoverished, listless home of men.

"You dunderhead!" Timothy Yule assured Jehoshaphat. "He 've been robbin' you."

"Maybe," said Jehoshaphat, listlessly. "I been givin' the back kitchen a coat o' lime, an' I is n't had no time t' give t' thinkin'."

"An' he 've been robbin' this harbor for forty year."

"Dear man!" Jehoshaphat exclaimed, in dull surpri
"Have he told you that?"

"Told me!" cried Timothy. "No," he added, w
bitter restraint; "he 've not."

Jehoshaphat was puzzled. "Then," said he, "h
come you t' know?"

"Why, they *says* so."

Jehoshaphat's reply was gently spoken, a compassiona
rebuke. "An I was you, Timothy," said he, "I would
be harsh in judgment. 'T is n't quite Christian."

"My God!" ejaculated the disgusted Timothy.

After that they pulled in silence for a time. Jehosh
phat's face was averted, and Timothy was aware of havi
in a moment of impatience, not only committed a strate
indiscretion, but of having betrayed his innermost hab
The light grew and widened and yellowed; the Cottag
of Satan's Trap took definite outline, the hills their ancie
form, the sea its familiar aspect. Sea and sky and dista
rock were wide awake and companionably smiling. T
earth was blue and green and yellow, a glittering place.

"Look you! Jehoshaphat," Timothy demanded, "
you in debt?"

"I is."

"An' is you ever been out o' debt?"

"I is n't."

"How come you t' know?"

"Why," Jehoshaphat explained, "Mister Wull *told* m
so. An' whatever," he qualified, "father was in del
when he died, an' Mister Wull told me I ought t' pa
Father was *my* father," Jehoshaphat argued, "an' I 'lowe
I *would* pay. For," he concluded, "'t was right."

"Is he ever give you an account?"

"Well, no — no, he have n't. But it would n't do no ood, for I 've no learnin', an' can't read."

"No," Timothy burst out, "an' he is n't give nobody o accounts."

"Well," Jehoshaphat apologized, "he 've a good deal n his mind, lookin' out for the wants of us folk. He 've a *onderful* lot o' brain labor. He 've all them letters write t' St. John's, an' he 've got a power of 'rithmetic t' o, an' he 've got the writin' in them big books t' trouble n, an' —"

Timothy sneered.

"Ah, well," sighed Jehoshaphat, "an I was you, imothy, I would n't be harsh in judgment."

Timothy laughed uproariously.

"Not harsh," Jehoshaphat repeated quietly — "not judgment."

"Damn un!" Timothy cursed between his teeth. "The reedy squid, the devil-fish's spawn, with his garden an' is sheep an' his cow! *You* got a cow, Jehoshaphat? *ou* got turnips an' carrots? *You* got ol' Bill Lutt t' ather soil, an' plant, an' dig, an' weed, while you smokes lug-cut in the sunshine? Where 's *your* garden, Jehoshphat? Where 's *your* onions? The green lump-fish! n' where do he get his onions, an' where do he get his oup, an' where do he get his cheese an' raisins? 'T is ut o' you an' me an' all the other poor folk o' Satan's rap. 'T is from the fish, an' *he* never cast a line. 'T is om the fish that we takes from the grounds while he quats like a lobster in the red house an' in the shop. An' e gives less for the fish 'n he gets, an' he gets more for he goods an' grub 'n he gives. The thief, the robber, the

whale's pup! Is *you* able, Jehoshaphat, t' have the doctor from Sniffle's Arm for *your* woman? Is *you* able t' feed *your* kids with cow's milk an' baby-food?"

Jehoshaphat mildly protested that he had not known the necessity.

"An' what," Timothy proceeded, "is you ever got from the grounds but rheumatiz an' salt-water sores?"

"I got enough t' eat," said Jehoshaphat.

Timothy was scornful.

"Well," Jehoshaphat argued, in defense of himself, "the world have been goin' for'ard a wonderful long time at Satan's Trap, an' nobody *else* have n't got no more 'n just enough."

"Enough!" Timothy fumed. "'T is kind o' the Satan's Trap trader t' give you that! *I 'll* tell un," he exploded; "I 'll give un a piece o' my mind afore I dies."

"Don't!" Jehoshaphat pleaded.

Timothy snorted his indignation.

"I would n't be rash," said Jehoshaphat. "Maybe," he warned, "he 'd not take your fish no more. An' maybe he 'd close the shop an' go away."

"Jus' you wait," said Timothy.

"Don't you do it, lad!" Jehoshaphat begged. "'T would make such a wonderful fuss in the world!"

"An' would you think o' that?"

"I is n't got *time* t' think," Jehoshaphat complained. "I 'm busy. I 'low I got my fish t' cotch an' cure. I is n't got time. I — I — I 'm too busy."

They were on the grounds. The day had broken, a blue, serene day, knowing no disquietude. They cast their grapnels overside, and they fished until the shadows had fled around the world and were hurrying out of the

east. And they reeled their lines, and stowed the fish, and patiently pulled toward the harbor tickler, talking not at all of the Satan's Trap trader, but only of certain agreeable expectations which the young Timothy had been informed he might entertain with reasonable certainty.

"I 'low," said Jehoshaphat, when they were within the harbor, "I understand. I got the hang of it," he repeated, with a little smile, "now."

"Oh what?" Timothy wondered.

"Well," Jehoshaphat explained, "'t is your first."

This was a sufficient explanation of Timothy's discontent. Jehoshaphat remembered that he, too, had been troubled, fifteen years ago, when the first of the nine had brought the future to his attention. He was more at ease when this enlightenment came.

Old John Wull was a gray, lean little widower, with a bald head, bowed legs, a wide, straight, thin-lipped mouth, and shaven, ashy cheeks. His eyes were young enough, blue and strong and quick, often peering masterfully through the bushy brows, which he could let drop like a curtain. In contrast with the rugged hills and illimitable sea and stout men of Satan's Trap, his body was withered and contemptibly diminutive. His premises occupied a point of shore within the harbor — a wharf, a storehouse, a shop, a red dwelling, broad drying-flakes, and a group of outbuildings, all of which were self-sufficient and proud, and looked askance at the cottages that lined the harbor shore and strayed upon the hills beyond.

It was his business to supply the needs of the folk in exchange for the fish they took from the sea — the barest need, the whole of the catch. Upon this he insisted, be-

cause he conscientiously believed, in his own way, that upon the fruits of toil commercial enterprise should feed to satiety, and cast the peelings and cores into the back yard for the folk to nose like swine.

Thus he was accustomed to allow the fifty illiterate, credulous families of Satan's Trap sufficient to keep them warm and to quiet their stomachs, but no more; for, he complained: "Is n't they got enough on their backs?" and, "Is n't they got enough t' eat?" and, "Lord!" said he, "they 'll be wantin' figs an' joolry next."

There were times when he trembled for the fortunes he had gathered in this way — in years when there were no fish, and he must feed the men and women and human litters of the Trap for nothing at all, through which he was courageous, if niggardly. When the folk complained against him, he wondered, with a righteous wag of the head, what would become of them if he should vanish with his property and leave them to fend for themselves. Sometimes he reminded them of this possibility; and then they got afraid, and thought of their young ones, and begged him to forget their complaint. His only disquietude was the fear of hell: whereby he was led to pay the wage of a succession of parsons, if they preached comforting doctrine and blue-penciled the needle's eye from the Testament; but not otherwise. By some wayward, compelling sense of moral obligation, he paid the school-teacher, invariably, generously, so that the little folk of Satan's Trap might learn to read and write in the winter months. 'Rithmetic he condemned, but tolerated, as being some part of that unholy, imperative thing called l'arnin'; but he had no feeling against readin' and writin'. There was no other trader within thirty miles.

"They 'll trade with me," John Wull would say to himself, and be comforted, "or they 'll starve."

It was literally true.

In that winter certain gigantic forces, with which old John Wull had nothing whatever to do, were inscrutably passionate. They went their way, in some vast, appalling quarrel, indifferent to the consequences. John Wull's soul, money, philosophy, the hopes of Satan's Trap, the various agonies of the young, were insignificant. Currents and winds and frost had no knowledge of them. It was a late season: the days were gray and bitter, the air was frosty, the snow lay crisp and deep in the valleys, the harbor water was frozen. Long after the time for blue winds and yellow hills the world was still sullen and white. Easterly gales, blowing long and strong, swept the far outer sea of drift-ice — drove it in upon the land, pans and bergs, and heaped it against the cliffs. There was no safe exit from Satan's Trap. The folk were shut in by ice and an impassable wilderness. This was not by the power or contriving of John Wull: the old man had nothing to do with it; but he compelled the season, impiously, it may be, into conspiracy with him. By and by, in the cottages, the store of food, which had seemed sufficient when the first snow flew, was exhausted. The flour-barrels of Satan's Trap were empty. Full barrels were in the storehouse of John Wull, but in no other place. So it chanced that one day, in a swirling fall of snow, Jehoshaphat Rudd came across the harbor with a dog and a sled.

John Wull, from the little office at the back of the shop, where it was warm and still, watched the fisherman breast the white wind.

"Mister Wull," said Jehoshaphat, when he stood in the office, "I 'low I 'll be havin' another barrel o' flour."

Wull frowned.

"Ay," Jehoshaphat repeated, perplexed; "another barrel."

Wull pursed his lips.

"O' flour," said Jehoshaphat, staring.

The trader drummed on the desk and gazed out of the window. He seemed to forget that Jehoshaphat Rudd stood waiting. Jehoshaphat felt awkward and out of place; he smoothed his tawny beard, cracked his fingers, scratched his head, shifted from one foot to the other. Some wonder troubled him, then some strange alarm. He had never before realized that the lives of his young were in the keeping of this man.

"Flour," he ventured weakly — "one barrel."

Wull turned. "It 's gone up," said he.

"Have it, now!" Jehoshaphat exclaimed. "I 'lowed last fall, when I paid eight," he proceeded, "that she 'd clumb as high as she could get 'ithout fallin'. But she 've gone up, says you? Dear man!"

"Sky high," said the trader.

"Dear man!"

The stove was serene and of good conscience. It labored joyously in response to the clean-souled wind. For a moment, while the trader watched the snow through his bushy brows and Jehoshaphat Rudd hopelessly scratched his head, its hearty, honest roar was the only voice lifted in the little office at the back of John Wull's shop.

"An' why?" Jehoshaphat timidly asked.

"Scarcity."

"Oh," said Jehoshaphat, as though he understood. He paused. "Is n't you got as much as you *had?*" he inquired.

The trader nodded.

"Is n't you got enough in the storehouse t' last till the mail-boat runs?"

"Plenty, thank God!"

"Scarcity," Jehoshaphat mused. "Mm-m-m! Oh, I *sees*," he added vacantly. "Well, Mister Wull," he sighed, "I 'low I 'll take one of Early Rose an' pay the rise."

Wull whistled absently.

"Early Rose," Jehoshaphat repeated, with a quick, keen glance of alarm.

The trader frowned.

"Rose," Jehoshaphat muttered. He licked his lips. "Of Early," he reiterated, in a gasp, "Rose."

"All right, Jehoshaphat."

Down came the big key from the nail. Jehoshaphat's round face beamed. The trader slapped his ledger shut, moved toward the door; but stopped dead, and gazed out of the window, while his brows fell over his eyes, and he fingered the big key.

"Gone up t' eighteen," said he, without turning.

Jehoshaphat stared aghast.

"Wonderful high for flour," the trader continued, in apologetic explanation; "but flour 's wonderful scarce."

"'T is n't *right!*" Jehoshaphat declared. "Eighteen dollars a barrel for Early Rose? 'T is n't right!"

The key was restored to the nail.

"I can't pay it, Mister Wull. No, no, man, I can't do it. Eighteen! Mercy o' God! 'T is n't right! 'T is too *much* for Early Rose."

The trader wheeled.

"An' I *won't* pay it," said Jehoshaphat.

"You don't have to," was the placid reply.

Jehoshaphat started. Alarm — a sudden vision of his children — quieted his indignation. "But, Mister Wull, sir," he pleaded, "I got t' have it. I — why — I just *got* t' have it!"

The trader was unmoved.

"Eighteen!" cried Jehoshaphat, flushing. "Mercy o' God! I says 't is n't right."

"'T is the price."

"'T is n't right!"

Wull's eyes were now flashing. His lips were drawn thin over his teeth. His brows had fallen again. From the ambush they made he glared at Jehoshaphat.

"I says," said he, in a passionless voice, "that the price o' flour at Satan's Trap is this day eighteen."

Jehoshaphat was in woeful perplexity.

"Eighteen," snapped Wull. "Hear me?"

They looked into each other's eyes. Outside the storm raged, a clean, frank passion; for nature is a fair and honest foe. In the little office at the back of John Wull's shop the withered body of the trader shook with vicious anger. Jehoshaphat's round, brown, simple face was gloriously flushed; his head was thrown back, his shoulders were squared, his eyes were sure and fearless.

"'T is robbery!" he burst out.

Wull's wrath exploded. "You baynoddie!" he began; "you pig of a punt-fisherman; you penniless, ragged fool; you man without a copper; you sore-handed idiot! What you whinin' about? What right *you* got t' yelp in my office?"

Of habit Jehoshaphat quailed.

"If you don't want my flour," roared Wull, fetching the counter a thwack with his white fist, "leave it be! 'T is mine, is n't it? I *paid* for it. I *got* it. There 's a law in this land, you pauper, that *says* so. There 's a law. Hear me? There 's a law. Mine, mine!" he cried, in a frenzy, lifting his lean arms. "What I got is mine. I 'll eat it," he fumed, "or I 'll feed my pigs with it, or I 'll spill it for the fishes. They is n't no law t' make me sell t' *you*. An' you 'll pay what I 'm askin', or you 'll starve."

"You would n't do that, sir," Jehoshaphat gently protested. "Oh, no—*no!* Ah, now, you would n't do that. You would n't throw it t' the fishes, would you? Not flour! 'T would be a sinful waste."

"'T is my right."

"An', Mister Wull," Jehoshaphat argued, with a little smile, "'t is yours, I 'll admit; but we been sort o' dependin' on you t' lay in enough t' get us through the winter."

Wull's response was instant and angry. "Get you out o' my shop," said he, "an' come back with a civil tongue."

"I 'll go, Mister Wull," said Jehoshaphat quietly, picking at a thread in his faded cap. "I 'll go. Ay, I 'll go. But — I got t' have the flour. I — I — just *got* to. But I won't pay," he concluded, "no eighteen dollars a barrel."

The trader laughed.

"For," said Jehoshaphat, "'t is n't right."

Jehoshaphat went home without the flour, complaining of the injustice.

Jehoshaphat Rudd would have no laughter in the house, no weeping, no questions, no noise of play. For two days he sat brooding by the kitchen fire. His past of toil and

unfailing recompense, the tranquil routine of life, was strangely like a dream, far off, half forgot. As a reality it had vanished. Hitherto there had been no future; there was now no past, no ground for expectation. He must, at least, take time to think, have courage to judge, the will to retaliate. It was more important, more needful, to sit in thought, with idle hands, than to mend the rent in his herring seine. He was mystified and deeply troubled.

Sometimes by day Jehoshaphat strode to the window and looked out over the harbor ice to the point of shore where stood the storehouse and shop and red dwelling of old John Wull. By night he drew close to the fire, and there sat with his face in his hands; nor would he go to bed, nor would he speak, nor would he move. In the night of the third day the children awoke and cried for food. Jehoshaphat rose from his chair, and stood shaking, with breath suspended, hands clenched, eyes wide. He heard their mother rise and go crooning from cot to cot. Presently the noise was hushed: sobs turned to whimpers, and whimpers to plaintive whispers, and these complaints to silence. The house was still; but Jehoshaphat seemed all the while to hear the children crying in the little rooms above. He began to pace the floor, back and forth, back and forth, now slow, now in a fury, now with listless tread. And because his children had cried for food in the night the heart of Jehoshaphat Rudd was changed. From the passion of those hours, at dawn he emerged serene, and went to bed.

At noon of that day Jehoshaphat Rudd was in the little office at the back of the shop. John Wull was alone.

perched on a high stool at the desk, a pen in hand, a huge book open before him.

"I 'm come, sir," said Jehoshaphat, "for the barrel o' flour."

The trader gave him no attention.

"I 'm come, sir," Jehoshaphat repeated, his voice rising a little, "for the flour."

The trader dipped his pen in ink.

"I says, sir," said Jehoshaphat, laying a hand with some passion upon the counter, "that I 'm come for that there barrel o' flour."

"An' I s'pose," the trader softly inquired, eyeing the page of his ledger more closely, "that you thinks you 'll get it, eh?"

"Ay, sir."

Wull dipped his pen and scratched away.

"Mister Wull."

The trader turned a leaf.

"Mister Wull," Jehoshaphat cried angrily, "I wants flour. Is you gone deaf overnight?"

Impertinent question and tone of voice made old John Wull wheel on the stool. In the forty years he had traded at Satan's Trap he had never before met with impertinence that was not timidly offered. He bent a scowling face upon Jehoshaphat. "An' you thinks," said he, "that you 'll get it?"

"I does."

"Oh, you does, does you?"

Jehoshaphat nodded.

"It all depends," said Wull. "You 're wonderful deep in debt, Jehoshaphat." The trader had now command of himself. "I been lookin' up your account," he went on

softly. "You 're so wonderful far behind, Jehoshaphat, on account o' high livin' an' Christmas presents, that I been thinkin' I might do the business a injury by givin' you more credit. I can't think o' *myself*, Jehoshaphat, in this matter. 'T is a business matter; an' I got t' think o' the *business*. You sees, Jehoshaphat, eighteen dollars more credit —"

"Eight," Jehoshaphat corrected.

"Eighteen," the trader insisted.

Jehoshaphat said nothing, nor did his face express feeling. He was looking stolidly at the big key of the storehouse.

"The flour depends," Wull proceeded, after a thoughtful pause, through which he had regarded the gigantic Jehoshaphat with startled curiosity, "on what I thinks the business will stand in the way o' givin' more credit t' you."

"No, sir," said Jehoshaphat.

Wull put down his pen, slipped from the high stool, and came close to Jehoshaphat. He was mechanical and slow in these movements, as though all at once perplexed, given some new view, which disclosed many and strange possibilities. For a moment he leaned against the counter, legs crossed, staring at the floor, with his long, scrawny right hand smoothing his cheek and chin. It was quiet in the office, and warm, and well-disposed, and sunlight came in at the window.

Soon the trader stirred, as though awakening. "You was sayin' eight, was n't you?" he asked, without looking up.

"Eight, sir."

The trader pondered this. "An' how," he inquired at last, "was you makin' that out?"

"'T is a fair price."

Wull smoothed his cheek and chin. "Ah!" he murmured. He mused, staring at the floor, his restless fingers beating a tattoo on his teeth. He had turned woebegone and very pale. "Jehoshaphat," he asked, turning upon the man, "would you mind tellin' me just how you 're 'lowin' t' get my flour against my will?"

Jehoshaphat looked away.

"I 'd like t' know," said Wull, "if you would n't mind tellin' me."

"No," Jehoshaphat answered. "No, Mister Wull — I would n't mind tellin'."

"Then," Wull demanded, "how?"

"Mister Wull," Jehoshaphat explained, "I 'm a bigger man than you."

It was very quiet in the office. The wind had gone down in the night, the wood in the stove was burned to glowing coals. It was very, very still in old John Wull's office at the back of the shop, and old John Wull turned away, and went absently to the desk, where he fingered the leaves of his ledger, and dipped his pen in ink, but did not write. There was a broad window over the desk, looking out upon the harbor; through this, blankly, he watched the children at play on the ice, but did not see them. By and by, when he had closed the book and put the desk in order, he came back to the counter, leaned against it, crossed his legs, began to smooth his chin, while he mused, staring at the square sunlight on the floor. Jehoshaphat could not look at him. The old man's face was so gray and drawn, so empty of pride and power, his hand so thin and unsteady, his eyes so dull, so deep in troubled shadows, that Jehoshaphat's heart ached. He wished that the world

had gone on in peace, that the evil practices of the great were still hid from his knowledge, that there had been no vision, no call to revolution; he rebelled against the obligation upon him, though it had come to him as a thing that was holy. He regretted his power, had shame, indeed, because of the ease with which the mighty could be put down. He felt that he must be generous, tender, that he must not misuse his strength.

The patch of yellow light had perceptibly moved before the trader spoke. "Jehoshaphat," he said, "you know much about law?"

"Well, no, Mister Wull," Jehoshaphat answered, with simple candor; "not *too* much."

"The law will put you in jail for this."

Constables and jails were like superstitious terrors to Jehoshaphat. He had never set eyes on the brass buttons and stone walls of the law.

"Oh, no — *no!*" he protested. "He would n't! Not in *jail!*"

"The law," Wull warned, with grim delight, "will put you in jail."

"He *could n't!*" Jehoshaphat complained. "As I takes it, the law sees fair play atween men. That 's what he was *made* for. I 'low he put *you* in jail for raisin' the price o' flour t' eighteen; but not me — not for what I 'm bound t' do, Mister Wull, law or no law, as God lives! 'T would n't be right, sir, if he put me in jail for that."

"It will."

"But," Jehoshaphat persisted doggedly, "'t would n't be *right!*"

The trader fell into a muse.

"I 'm come," Jehoshaphat reminded him, "for the flour."

"You can't have it."

"Oh, dear!" Jehoshaphat sighed. "My, my! Pshaw! I 'low, then, us 'll just have t' *take* it."

Jehoshaphat went to the door of the shop. It was cold and gloomy in the shop. He opened the door. The public of Satan's Trap, in the persons of ten men of the place, fathers of families (with the exception of Timothy Yule, who had qualified upon his expectations), trooped over the greasy floor, their breath cloudy in the frosty air, and crowded into the little office, in the wake of Jehoshaphat Rudd. They had the gravity of mien, the set faces, the compassionate eyes, the merciless purpose, of a jury. The shuffling subsided. It was once more quiet in the little office. Timothy Yule's hatred got the better of his sense of propriety: he laughed, but the laugh expired suddenly, for Jehoshaphat Rudd's hand fell with unmistakable meaning upon his shoulder.

John Wull faced them.

"I 'low, Mister Wull," said Jehoshaphat, diffidently, "that we wants the storehouse key."

The trader put the key in his pocket.

"The key," Jehoshaphat objected; "we wants that there key."

"Moses!" old John Wull snarled, "you 'll all go t' jail for this, if they 's a law in Newfoundland."

The threat was ignored.

"Don't hurt un, lads," Jehoshaphat cautioned; "for he 's so wonderful tender. He 've not been bred the way *we* was. He 's wonderful old an' lean an' brittle," he added gently; "so I 'low we 'd best be careful."

John Wull's resistance was merely technical.

"Now, Mister Wull," said Jehoshaphat, when the big key was in his hand, and the body of the trader had been tenderly deposited in his chair by the stove, "don't you go an' fret. We is n't the thieves that break in an' steal nor the moths that go an' corrupt" — Jehoshaphat's idea of the moth was of the very vaguest — "We is n't robbers, an' we is n't mean men. We 're the public," he explained impressively, "o' Satan's Trap. We got together, Mister Wull," he continued, feeling some delight in the oratory which had been thrust upon him, "an' we 'lowed that flour was worth about eight; but we 'll pay nine, for we got thinkin' that if flour goes up an' down, accordin' t' the will o' God, it ought t' go up now, if ever, the will o' God bein' a mystery, anyhow. We don't want you t' close up the shop an' go away, after this, Mister Wull; for we got t' have you, or some one like you, t' do what you been doin', so as we can have minds free o' care for the fishin'. If they was anybody at Satan's Trap that could read an' write like you, an' knowed about money an' prices — if they was anybody like that at Satan's Trap, willin' t' do woman's work, which I doubts, we would n't care whether you went or stayed; but they is n't, an' we can't do 'ithout you. So don't you fret," Jehoshaphat concluded. "You set right there by the fire in this little office o' yours. Tom Lower 'ill put more billets on the fire for you, an' you 'll be wonderful comfortable till we gets through. I 'll see that account is kep' by Tim Yule of all we takes. You can put it on the books just when you likes. No hurry, Mister Wull — no hurry. The prices will be them that held in the fall o' the year, 'cept flour, which is gone up t' nine by the barrel. An', ah, now, Mister Wull," Jehoshaphat pleaded, "don't you have no hard feelin'. 'T

would n't be right. We 're the public; so *please* don't you go an' have no hard feelin'."

The trader would say nothing.

"Now, lads," said Jehoshaphat, "us 'll go."

In the storehouse there were two interruptions to the transaction of business in an orderly fashion. Tom Lower, who was a lazy fellow and wasteful, as Jehoshaphat knew, demanded thirty pounds of pork, and Jehoshaphat knocked him down. Timothy Yule, the anarchist, proposed to sack the place, and him Jehoshaphat knocked down twice. There was no further difficulty.

"Now, Mister Wull," said Jehoshaphat, as he laid the key and the account on the trader's desk, "the public o' Satan's Trap is wonderful sorry; but the thing had t' be done."

The trader would not look up.

"It makes such a wonderful fuss in the world," Jehoshaphat complained, "that the crew had n't no love for the job. But it — it — it jus' had t' be done."

Old John Wull scowled.

For a long time, if days may be long, Jehoshaphat Rudd lived in the fear of constables and jails, which were the law, to be commanded by the wealth of old John Wull; and for the selfsame period — the days being longer because of the impatience of hate — old John Wull lived in expectation of his revenge. Jehoshaphat Rudd 'lowed he 'd stand by, anyhow, an' *go* t' jail, if 't was needful t' maintain the rights o' man. Ay, *he 'd* go t' jail, an' be whipped an' starved, as the imagination promised, but he 'd be jiggered if he 'd "'*pologize*." Old John Wull kept grim watch upon the winds; for upon the way the wind

blew depended the movement of the ice, and the clearing of the sea, and the first voyage of the mail-boat. He was glad that he had been robbed; so glad that he rubbed his lean, transparent hands until the flush of life appeared to surprise him; so glad that he chuckled until his housekeeper feared his false teeth would by some dreadful mischance vanish within him. Jail? ay, he 'd put Jehosaphat Rudd in jail; but he would forgive the others, that they might continue to fish and to consume food. In jail, ecod! t' be fed on bread an' water, t' be locked up t' wear stripes, t' make brooms, t' lie there so long that the last little Rudd would find its own father a stranger when 't was all over with. 'T would be fair warning t' the malcontent o' the folk; they would bide quiet, hereafter. All the people would toil and trade; they would complain no more. John Wull was glad that the imprudence of Jehoshaphat Rudd had provided him with power to restore the ancient peace to Satan's Trap.

One day in the spring, when the bergs and great floes of the open had been blown to sea, and the snow was gone from the slopes of the hills, and the sun was out, and the earth was warm and yellow and merrily dripping, old John Wull attempted a passage of the harbor by the ice, which there had lingered, confined. It was only to cross the narrows from Haul-Away Head to Daddy Tool's Point, no more than a stone's throw for a stout lad. The ice had been broken into pans by a stiff breeze from the west, and was then moving with the wind, close-packed, bound out to sea, there to be dispersed and dissolved. It ran sluggishly through the narrows, scraping the rocks of the head and of the point; the heavy of the sea slipped underneath and billowed the way, and

the outermost pans of ice broke from the press and went off with the waves. But the feet of old John Wull were practised; he essayed the crossing without concern, indeed with an absent mind. Presently he stopped to rest; and he stared out to sea, musing; and when again he looked about, the sea had softly torn the pan from the pack.

Old John Wull was adrift, and bound out.

"Ahoy, you, Jehoshaphat!" he shouted. "Jehoshaphat! Oh, Jehoshaphat!"

Jehoshaphat came to the door of his cottage on Daddy Tool's Point.

"Launch that rodney,"[1] Wull directed, "an' put me on shore. An' lively, man," he complained, "I 'll be cotchin' cold out here."

With the help of Timothy Yule, who chanced to be gossiping in the kitchen, Jehoshaphat Rudd got the rodney in the open water by the stage-head. What with paddling and much hearty hauling and pushing they had the little craft across the barrier of ice in the narrows before the wind had blown old John Wull a generous rod out to sea.

"Timothy, lad," Jehoshaphat whispered, "I 'low you better stay here."

Timothy kept to the ice.

"You been wonderful slow," growled Wull. "Come 'round t' the lee side, you dunderhead! Think I wants t' get my feet wet?"

"No, sir," Jehoshaphat protested. "Oh, no; I would n't have you do that an I could *help* it."

The harbor folk were congregating on Haul-Away Head

[1] A rodney is a small, light boat, used for getting about among the ice packs, chiefly in seal-hunting.

and Daddy Tool's Point. 'T was an agreeable excitement to see John Wull in a mess — in a ludicrous predicament, which made him helpless before their eyes. They whispered, they smiled behind their hands, they chuckled inwardly.

Jehoshaphat pulled to the lee side of the pan.

"Come 'longside," said Wull.

Jehoshaphat dawdled.

"Come 'longside, you fool!" Wull roared. "Think I can leap three fathom?"

"No, sir; oh, no; no, indeed."

"Then come 'longside."

Jehoshaphat sighed.

"Come in here, you crazy pauper!" Wull screamed, stamping his rage. "Come in here an' put me ashore!"

"Mister Wull."

Wull eyed the man in amazement.

"Labor," said Jehoshaphat, gently, "is gone up."

Timothy Yule laughed, but on Haul-Away Head and Daddy Tool's Point the folk kept silent; nor did old John Wull, on the departing pan, utter a sound.

"Sky high," Jehoshaphat concluded.

The sun was broadly, warmly shining, the sky was blue; but the wind was rising smartly, and far off over the hills of Satan's Trap, beyond the wilderness that was known, it was turning gray and tumultuous. Old John Wull scowled, wheeled, and looked away to sea; he did not see the ominous color and writhing in the west.

"We don't want no law, Mister Wull," Jehoshaphat continued, "at Satan's Trap."

Wull would not attend.

"Not law," Jehoshaphat repeated; "for we knows well

enough at Satan's Trap," said he, "what 's fair as atween men. You jus' leave the law stay t' St. John's, sir, where he 's t' home. He is n't fair, by no means; an' we don't want un here t' make trouble."

The trader's back was still turned.

"An', Mister Wull," Jehoshaphat entreated, his face falling like a child's, "don't you have no hard feelin' over this. Ah, now, *don't!*" he pleaded. "You won't, will you? For we is n't got no hate for you, Mister Wull, an' we is n't got no greed for ourselves. We just wants what 's fair -- just what 's fair." He added: "Just on'y that. We likes t' see you have your milk an' butter an' fresh beef an' nuts, an' whisky. *We* don't want them things, for they is n't ours, by rights. All we wants is just on'y fair play. We don't want no law, sir: for, ecod!" Jehoshaphat declared, scratching his head in bewilderment, "the law looks after them that *has*, so far as I *knows*, sir, an' don't know nothin' about them that *has n't*. An' we don't want un here at Satan's Trap. We won't *have* un! We — we — why, ecod! we — we can't *'low* it! We 'd be ashamed of ourselves an' we 'lowed you t' fetch the law t' Satan's Trap t' wrong us. We 're free men, is n't we?" he demanded indignantly. "Is n't we? Ecod! I 'low we *is!* You think, John Wull," he continued, in wrath, "that *you* can do what you like with *we* just because you an' the likes o' you is gone an' got a law? You can't! You can't! An' you can't, just because we won't *'low* it."

It was an incendiary speech.

"No, you can't!" Timothy Yule screamed from the ice, "you robber, you thief, you whale's pup! *I 'll* tell you what I thinks o' you. You can't scare *me*. I wants that

meadow you stole from my father. I wants that meadow —"

"Timothy," Jehoshaphat interrupted quietly, "you 're a fool. Shut your mouth!"

Tom Lower, the lazy, wasteful Tom Lower, ran down to the shore of Haul-Away Head, and stamped his feet, and shook his fist. "I wants your red house," he shouted. "I wants your cow an' your raisins an' your candy! We got you down, you robber! An' I 'll *have* your red house I 'll have your wool blankets, I 'll have your —"

"Tom Lower," Jehoshaphat roared, rising in wrath. "I 'll floor you for that! That I will — next time I catch you out."

John Wull turned half-way around and grinned.

"Mister Wull," Jehoshaphat asked propitiatingly, "won't you be put ashore?"

"Not at tne price."

"I 'low, then, sir," said Jehoshaphat, in some impatience, "that you might as well be comfortable while you makes up your mind. Here," — He cast a square of tarpaulin on the ice, and chancing to discover Timothy Yule's jacket, he added that — "There!" he grunted with satisfaction; "you 'll be sittin' soft an' dry while you does your thinkin'. Don't be long, sir — not overlong *Please* don't, sir," he begged; "for it looks t' me — it looks wonderful t' me — like a spurt o' weather."

John Wull spread the tarpaulin.

"An' when you gets through considerin' of the question," said Jehoshaphat, suggestively, "an' is come t' my way o' thinkin', why all you got t' do is lift your little finger, an' I 'll put you ashore," — A gust of wind whipped past, — "if I 'm able," Jehoshaphat added.

Pan and boat drifted out from the coast, a slow course, which in an hour had reduced the harbor folk to black pygmies on the low rocks to windward. Jehoshaphat paddled patiently in the wake of the ice. Often he raised his head, in apprehension, to read the signs in the west; and he sighed a deal, and sometimes muttered to himself. Old John Wull was squatted on the tarpaulin, with Timothy Yule's jacket for a cushion, his great-coat wrapped close about him, his cap pulled over his ears, his arms folded. The withered old fellow was as lean and blue and rigid and staring as a frozen corpse.

The wind had freshened. The look and smell of the world forboded a gale. Overhead the sky turned gray. There came a shadow on the sea, sullen and ominous. Gusts of wind ran offshore and went hissing out to sea; and they left the waters rippling black and flecked with froth wherever they touched. In the west, the sky, far away, changed from gray to deepest black and purple; and high up, midway, masses of cloud, with torn and streaming edges, rose swiftly toward the zenith. It turned cold. A great flake of snow fell on Jehoshaphat's cheek, and melted; but Jehoshaphat was pondering upon justice. He wiped the drop of water away with the back of his hand, because it tickled him, but gave the sign no heed.

"I 'low, Mister Wull," said he, doggedly, "that you better give Timothy Yule back his father's meadow. For nobody knows, sir," he argued, "why Timothy Yule's father went an' signed his name t' that there writin' just afore he died. 'T was n't right. He did n't ought t' sign it. An' you got t' give the meadow back."

John Wull was unmoved.

"An', look you! Mister Wull," Jehoshaphat continued.

pulling closer to the pan, addressing the bowed back of the trader, "you better not press young Isaac Lower for that cod-trap money. He 've too much trouble with that wife o' his t' be bothered by debt. Anyhow, you ought t' give un a chance. An', look you! you better let ol' Misses Jowl have back her garden t' Green Cove. The way you got that, Mister Wull, is queer. I don't know, but I 'low you better give it back, anyhow. You *got* to, Mister Wull; an', ecod! you got t' give the ol' woman a pound o' cheese an' five cents' worth — no, ten — ten cents' worth o' sweets t' make her feel good. She *likes* cheese. She 'lows she never could get *enough* o' cheese. She 'lows she *wished* she could have her fill afore she dies. An' you got t' give her a whole pound for herself."

They were drifting over the Tombstone grounds.

"Whenever you makes up your mind," Jehoshaphat suggested diffidently, "you lift your little finger — jus' your little finger."

There was no response.

"Your little finger," Jehoshaphat repeated. "Jus' your little finger — on'y that."

Wull faced about. "Jehoshaphat," said he, with a grin, "you would n't leave me."

"Jus' would n't I!"

"You would n't."

"You jus' wait and see."

"You would n't leave me," said Wull, "because you could n't. I knows you, Jehoshaphat — I knows you."

"You better look out."

"Come, now, Jehoshaphat, is you goin' t' leave an old man drift out t' sea an' die?"

Jehoshaphat was embarrassed.

"Eh, Jehoshaphat?"

"Well, no," Jehoshaphat admitted frankly. "I is n't; leastways, not alone."

"Not alone?" anxiously.

"No; not alone. I 'll go with you, Mister Wull, if you 're lonesome, an' wants company. You sees, sir, I can't give in. I jus' *can't!* I 'm here, Mister Wull, in this here cranky rodney, beyond the Tombstone grounds, with a dirty gale from a point or two south o' west about t' break, because I 'm the public o' Satan's Trap. I can die, sir, t' save gossip; but I sim-plee jus' is n't able t' give in. 'T would n't be *right.*"

"Well, *I* won't give in."

"Nor I, sir. So here we is — out here beyond the Tombstone grounds, you on a pan an' me in a rodney. An' the weather is n't — well — not quite *kind.*"

It was not. The black clouds, torn, streaming, had possessed the sky, and the night was near come. Haul-Away Head and Daddy Tool's Point had melted with the black line of coast. Return — safe passage through the narrows to the quiet water and warm lights of Satan's Trap — was almost beyond the most courageous hope. The wind broke from the shore in straight lines — a stout, agile wind, loosed for riot upon the sea. The sea was black, with a wind-lop upon the grave swell — a black-and-white sea, with spume in the gray air. The west was black, with no hint of other color — without the pity of purple or red. Roundabout the sea was breaking, troubled by the wind, ndifferent to the white little rodney and the lives o' men.

"You better give in," old John Wull warned.

"No," Jehoshaphat answered; "no; oh, no! I won't give in. Not *in.*"

A gust turned the black sea white.

"*You* better give in," said Jehoshaphat.

John Wull shrugged his shoulders and turned his back.

"Now, Mister Wull," said Jehoshaphat, firmly, "I 'low I can't stand this much longer. I 'low we can't be fools much longer an' get back t' Satan's Trap. I got a sail, here, Mister Wull; but, ecod! the beat t' harbor is n't pleasant t' *think* about."

"You better go home," sneered old John Wull.

"I 'low I *will*," Jehoshaphat declared.

Old John Wull came to the windward edge of the ice, and there stood frowning, with his feet submerged. "What was you sayin'?" he asked. "That you 'd go home?"

Jehoshaphat looked away.

"An' leave me?" demanded John Wull. "Leave *me*? *Me?*"

"I got t' think o' my kids."

"An' you 'd leave me t' *die?*"

"Well," Jehoshaphat complained, "'t is long past supper time. You better give in."

"I won't!"

The coast was hard to distinguish from the black sky in the west. It began to snow. Snow and night, allied would bring Jehoshaphat Rudd and old John Wull to cold death.

"Mister Wull," Jehoshaphat objected, "'t is long past supper-time, an' I wants t' go home."

"Go — an' be —!"

"I 'll count ten," Jehoshaphat threatened.

"You dass n't!"

"I don't know whether I 'll *go* or not," said Jehoshapha

"Maybe not. Anyhow, I 'll count ten, an' see what happens. Is you ready?"

Wull sat down on the tarpaulin.

"One," Jehoshaphat began.

John Wull seemed not to hear.

"Two," said Jehoshaphat. "Three — four — five — six — seven."

John Wull did not turn.

"Eight."

There was no sign of relenting.

"Nine."

Jehoshaphat paused. "God's mercy!" he groaned, "don't you be a fool, Mister Wull," he pleaded. "Does n't you *know* what the weather is?"

A wave — the lop raised by the wind — broke over the pan. John Wull stood up. There came a shower of snow.

"Eh?" Jehoshaphat demanded in agony.

"I won't give in," said old John Wull.

"Then I got t' say ten. I jus' *got* to."

"I dare you."

"I will, Mister Wull. Honest, I will! I 'll say ten an' you don't look out."

"Why don't you *do* it?"

"In a minute, Mister Wull. I 'll say it just as soon as I get up the sail. I will, Mister Wull, honest t' God!"

The coast had vanished.

"Look," cried Jehoshaphat, "we 're doomed men!"

The squall, then first observed, sent the sea curling over the ice. Jehoshaphat's rodney shipped the water it raised. Snow came in a blinding cloud.

"Say ten, you fool!" screamed old John Wull.

"Ten!"

John Wull came to the edge of the pan. 'T was hard for the old man to breast the gust. He put his hands to his mouth, that he might be heard in the wind.

"I give in!" he shouted.

Jehoshaphat managed to save the lives of both.

Old John Wull, with his lean feet in a tub of hot water, with a gray blanket over his shoulders, with a fire sputtering in the stove, with his housekeeper hovering near — old John Wull chuckled. The room was warm, and his stomach was full, and the wind, blowing horribly in the night, could work him no harm. There he sat, sipping herb tea to please his housekeeper, drinking whisky to please himself. He had no chill, no fever, no pain; perceived no warning of illness. So he chuckled away. It was all for the best. There would now surely be peace at Satan's Trap. Had he not yielded? What more could they ask? They would be content with this victory. For a long, long time they would not complain. He had yielded; very well: Timothy Yule should have his father's meadow, Dame Jowl, her garden and sweets and cheese, the young Lower be left in possession of the cod-trap, and there would be no law. Very well; the folk would neither pry nor complain for a long, long time: that was triumph enough for John Wull. So he chuckled away, with his feet in hot water, and a gray blanket about him, bald and withered and ghastly, but still feeling the comfort of fire and hot water and whisky, the pride of power.

And within three years John Wull possessed again all that he had yielded, and the world of Satan's Trap wagged on as in the days before the revolution.

THE AMBITIOUS GUEST[1]

By Nathaniel Hawthorne

One September night a family had gathered round their hearth, and piled it high with the driftwood of mountain streams, the dry cones of the pine, and the splintered ruins of great trees that had come crashing down the precipice. Up the chimney roared the fire, and brightened the room with its broad blaze. The faces of the father and mother had a sober gladness; the children laughed; the eldest daughter was the image of Happiness at seventeen; and the aged grandmother, who sat knitting in the warmest place, was the image of Happiness grown old. They had found the "herb, heart's-ease," in the bleakest spot of all New England. This family were situated in the Notch of the White Hills, where the wind was sharp throughout the year, and pitilessly cold in the winter, — giving their cottage all its fresh inclemency before it descended on the valley of the Saco. They dwelt in a cold spot and a dangerous one; for a mountain towered above their heads, so steep that the stones would often rumble down its sides and startle them at midnight.

The daughter had just uttered some simple jest that filled them all with mirth, when the wind came through the Notch and seemed to pause before their cottage —

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rattling the door, with a sound of wailing and lamentation, before it passed into the valley. For a moment it saddened them, though there was nothing unusual in the tones. But the family were glad again when they perceived that the latch was lifted by some traveler, whose footsteps had been unheard amid the dreary blast which heralded his approach, and wailed as he was entering, and went moaning away from the door.

Though they dwelt in such a solitude, these people held daily converse with the world. The romantic pass of the Notch is a great artery, through which the life-blood of internal commerce is continually throbbing between Maine, on one side, and the Green Mountains and the shores of the St. Lawrence, on the other. The stagecoach always drew up before the door of the cottage. The wayfarer, with no companion but his staff, paused here to exchange a word, that the sense of loneliness might not utterly overcome him ere he could pass through the cleft of the mountain, or reach the first house in the valley. And here the teamster, on his way to Portland market, would put up for the night; and, if a bachelor, might sit an hour beyond the usual bedtime, and steal a kiss from the mountain maid at parting. It was one of those primitive taverns where the traveler pays only for food and lodging, but meets with a homely kindness beyond all price. When the footsteps were heard, therefore, between the outer door and the inner one, the whole family rose up, grandmother, children, and all, as if about to welcome some one who belonged to them, and whose fate was linked with theirs.

The door was opened by a young man. His face at first wore the melancholy expression, almost despondency, of

one who travels a wild and bleak road, at nightfall and alone, but soon brightened up when he saw the kindly warmth of his reception. He felt his heart spring forward to meet them all, from the old woman, who wiped a chair with her apron, to the little child that held out its arms to him. One glance and smile placed the stranger on a footing of innocent familiarity with the eldest daughter.

"Ah, this fire is the right thing!" cried he; "especially when there is such a pleasant circle round it. I am quite benumbed; for the Notch is just like the pipe of a great pair of bellows; it has blown a terrible blast in my face all the way from Bartlett."

"Then you are going toward Vermont?" said the master of the house, as he helped to take a light knapsack off the young man's shoulders.

"Yes; to Burlington, and far enough beyond," replied he. "I meant to have been at Ethan Crawford's to-night; but a pedestrian lingers along such a road as this. It is no matter; for, when I saw this good fire, and all your cheerful faces, I felt as if you had kindled it on purpose for me, and were waiting my arrival. So I shall sit down among you, and make myself at home."

The frank-hearted stranger had just drawn his chair to the fire when something like a heavy footstep was heard without, rushing down the steep side of the mountain, as with long and rapid strides, and taking such a leap in passing the cottage as to strike the opposite precipice. The family held their breath, because they knew the sound, and their guest held his by instinct.

"The old mountain has thrown a stone at us, for fear we should forget him," said the landlord, recovering himself. "He sometimes nods his head and threatens to come

down; but we are old neighbors, and agree together pretty well upon the whole. Besides, we have a sure place of refuge hard by if he should be coming in good earnest."

Let us now suppose the stranger to have finished his supper of bear's meat; and, by his natural felicity of manner, to have placed himself on a footing of kindness with the whole family, so that they talked as freely together as if he belonged to their mountain brood. He was of a proud, yet gentle spirit — haughty and reserved among the rich and great; but ever ready to stoop his head to the lowly cottage door, and be like a brother or a son at the poor man's fireside. In the household of the Notch he found warmth and simplicity of feeling, the pervading intelligence of New England, and a poetry, of native growth, which they had gathered when they little thought of it from the mountain peaks and chasms, and at the very threshold of their romantic and dangerous abode. He had traveled far and alone; his whole life, indeed, had been a solitary path; for, with the lofty caution of his nature, he had kept himself apart from those who might otherwise have been his companions. The family, too, though so kind and hospitable, had that consciousness of unity among themselves, and separation from the world at large, which, in every domestic circle, should still keep a holy place where no stranger may intrude. But this evening a prophetic sympathy impelled the refined and educated youth to pour out his heart before the simple mountaineers, and constrained them to answer him with the same free confidence. And thus it should have been. Is not the kindred of a common fate a closer tie than that of birth?

The secret of the young man's character was a high and

abstracted ambition. He could have borne to live an undistinguished life, but not to be forgotten in the grave. Yearning desire had been transformed to hope; and hope, long cherished, had become like certainty that, obscurely as he journeyed now, a glory was to beam on all his pathway, — though not, perhaps, while he was treading it. But when posterity should gaze back into the gloom of what was now the present, they would trace the brightness of his footsteps, brightening as meaner glories faded, and confess that a gifted one had passed from his cradle to his tomb with none to recognize him.

"As yet," cried the stranger, — his cheek glowing and his eye flashing with enthusiasm, — "as yet, I have done nothing. Were I to vanish from the earth to-morrow, none would know so much of me as you: that a nameless youth came up at nightfall from the valley of the Saco, and opened his heart to you in the evening, and passed through the Notch by sunrise, and was seen no more. Not a soul would ask, 'Who was he? Whither did the wanderer go?' But I cannot die till I have achieved my destiny. Then, let Death come! I shall have built my monument!"

There was a continual flow of natural emotion, gushing forth amid abstracted revery, which enabled the family to understand this young man's sentiments, though so foreign from their own. With quick sensibility of the ludicrous, he blushed at the ardor into which he had been betrayed.

"You laugh at me," said he, taking the eldest daughter's hand, and laughing himself. "You think my ambition as nonsensical as if I were to freeze myself to death on the top of Mount Washington, only that people might spy at me from the country round about. And, truly, that would be a noble pedestal for a man's statue!"

"It is better to sit here by this fire," answered the girl, blushing, "and be comfortable and contented, though nobody thinks about us."

"I suppose," said her father, after a fit of musing, "there is something natural in what the young man says; and if my mind had been turned that way, I might have felt just the same. It is strange, wife, how his talk has set my head running on things that are pretty certain never to come to pass."

"Perhaps they may," observed the wife. "Is the man thinking what he will do when he is a widower?"

"No, no!" cried he, repelling the idea with reproachful kindness. "When I think of your death, Esther, I think of mine, too. But I was wishing we had a good farm in Bartlett, or Bethlehem, or Littleton, or some other township round the White Mountains; but not where they could tumble on our heads. I should want to stand well with my neighbors and be called Squire, and sent to General Court for a term or two; for a plain, honest man may do as much good there as a lawyer. And when I should be grown quite an old man and you an old woman, so as not to be long apart, I might die happy enough in my bed, and leave you all crying around me. A slate gravestone would suit me as well as a marble one — with just my name and age, and a verse of a hymn, and something to let people know that I lived an honest man and died a Christian."

"There now!" exclaimed the stranger; "it is our nature to desire a monument, be it slate or marble, or a pillar of granite, or a glorious memory in the universal heart of man."

"We're in a strange way to-night," said the wife, with

tears in her eyes. "They say it's a sign of something, when folks' minds go a-wandering so. Hark to the children!"

They listened accordingly. The younger children had been put to bed in another room, but with an open door between them, so that they could be heard talking busily among themselves. One and all seemed to have caught the infection from the fireside circle, and were outvying each other in wild wishes, and childish projects of what they would do when they came to be men and women. At length a little boy, instead of addressing his brothers and sisters, called out to his mother.

"I'll tell you what I wish, mother," cried he. "I want you and father and grandma'm, and all of us, and the stranger, too, to start right away, and go and take a drink out of the basin of the Flume!"

Nobody could help laughing at the child's notion of leaving a warm bed, and dragging them from a cheerful fire, to visit the basin of the Flume, — a brook which tumbles over the precipice, deep within the Notch. The boy had hardly spoken when a wagon rattled along the road, and stopped a moment before the door. It appeared to contain two or three men, who were cheering their hearts with the rough chorus of a song, which resounded, in broken notes, between the cliffs, while the singers hesitated whether to continue their journey or put up here for the night.

"Father," said the girl, "they are calling you by name."

But the good man doubted whether they had really called him, and was unwilling to show himself too solicitous of gain by inviting people to patronize his house. He therefore did not hurry to the door; and the lash being

soon applied, the travelers plunged into the Notch, still singing and laughing, though their music and mirth came back drearily from the heart of the mountain.

"There, mother!" cried the boy again. "They'd have given us a ride to the Flume."

Again they laughed at the child's pertinacious fancy for a night ramble. But it happened that a light cloud passed over the daughter's spirit; she looked gravely into the fire, and drew a breath that was almost a sigh. It forced its way in spite of the struggle to repress it. Then, starting and blushing, she looked quickly round the circle, as if they had caught a glimpse into her bosom. The stranger asked what she had been thinking of.

"Nothing," answered she, with a downcast smile. "Only I felt lonesome just then."

"Oh, I have always had a gift of feeling what is in other people's hearts," said he, half seriously. "Shall I tell the secrets of yours? For I know what to think when a young girl shivers by a warm hearth, and complains of lonesomeness at her mother's side. Shall I put these feelings into words?"

"They would not be a girl's feelings any longer if they could be put into words," replied the mountain nymph, laughing, but avoiding his eye.

All this was said apart. Perhaps a germ of love was springing in their hearts, so pure that it might blossom in Paradise, since it could not be matured on earth; for women worship such gentle dignity as his; and the proud, contemplative, yet kindly soul is oftenest captivated by simplicity like hers. But while they spoke softly, and he was watching the happy sadness, the lightsome shadows, the shy yearnings of a maiden's nature, the wind through

the Notch took a deeper and drearier sound. It seemed, as the fanciful stranger said, like the choral strain of the spirits of the past, who in old Indian times had their dwelling among these mountains, and made their heights and recesses a sacred region. There was a wail along the road, as if a funeral were passing. To chase away the gloom, the family threw pine branches on their fire, till the dry leaves crackled and the flame arose, discovering once again a scene of peace and humble happiness. The light hovered about them fondly, and caressed them all. There were the little faces of the children, peeping from their bed apart, and here the father's frame of strength, the mother's subdued and careful mien, the high-browed youth, the budding girl, and the good old grandma, still knitting in the warmest place. The aged woman looked up from her task, and, with fingers ever busy, was the next to speak.

"Old folks have their notions," said she, "as well as young ones. You've been wishing and planning, and letting your heads run on one thing and another, till you've set my mind a-wandering too. Now what should an old woman wish for, when she can go but a step or two before she comes to her grave? Children, it will haunt me night and day till I tell you."

"What is it, mother?" cried the husband and wife at once.

Then the old woman, with an air of mystery which drew the circle closer round the fire, informed them that she had provided her grave-clothes some years before, — a nice linen shroud, a cap with a muslin ruff, and everything of a finer sort than she had worn, since her wedding day. But this evening an old superstition had strangely recurred

to her. It used to be said, in her younger days, that if anything were amiss with a corpse, if only the ruff were not smooth, or the cap did not set right, the corpse in the coffin and beneath the clods would strive to put up its cold hands and arrange it. The bare thought made her nervous.

"Don't talk so, grandmother!" said the girl, shuddering.

"Now," — continued the old woman, with singular earnestness, yet smiling strangely at her own folly, — "I want one of you, my children, — when your mother is dressed in the coffin — I want one of you to hold a looking-glass over my face. Who knows but I may take a glimpse at myself, and see whether all's right."

"Old and young, we dream of graves and monuments," murmured the stranger youth. "I wonder how mariners feel when the ship is sinking, and they, unknown and undistinguished, are to be buried together in the ocean — that wide and nameless sepulcher?"

For a moment, the old woman's ghastly conception so engrossed the minds of her hearers that a sound abroad in the night, rising like the roar of a blast, had grown broad, deep, and terrible, before the fated group were conscious of it. The house and all within it trembled; the foundations of the earth seemed to be shaken, as if this awful sound were the peal of the last trump. Young and old exchanged one wild glance, and remained an instant, pale, affrighted, without utterance, or power to move. Then the same shriek burst simultaneously from all their lips. "The Slide! The Slide!"

The simplest words must intimate, but not portray, the unutterable horror of the catastrophe. The victims rushed from their cottage, and sought refuge in what they deemed a safer spot — where, in contemplation of such an emer-

gency, a sort of barrier had been reared. Alas! they had quitted their security, and fled right into the pathway of destruction. Down came the whole side of the mountain, in a cataract of ruin. Just before it reached the house, the stream broke into two branches — shivered not a window there, but overwhelmed the whole vicinity, blocked up the road, and annihilated everything in its dreadful course. Long ere the thunder of the great Slide had ceased to roar among the mountains, the mortal agony had been endured, and the victims were at peace. Their bodies were never found.

The next morning, the light smoke was seen stealing from the cottage chimney up the mountain side. Within, the fire was yet smoldering on the hearth, and the chairs in a circle around it, as if the inhabitants had but gone forth to view the devastation of the Slide and would shortly return, to thank Heaven for their miraculous escape. All had left separate tokens, by which those who had known the family were made to shed a tear for each. Who has not heard their name? The story has been told far and wide, and will forever be a legend of these mountains. Poets have sung their fate.

There were circumstances which led some to suppose that a stranger had been received into the cottage on this awful night, and had shared the catastrophe of all its inmates. Others denied that there were sufficient grounds for such a conjecture. Woe for the high-souled youth, with his dream of Earthly Immortality! His name and person utterly unknown; his history, his way of life, his plans, a mystery never to be solved, his death and his existence equally a doubt! Whose was the agony of that death moment?

THE LANTERN[1]

By Alice Brown

Marshall Bruce and his wife, Janie, lived in a flat ingeniously contrived to be hot in summer and, by a defective system of heating, very cold in winter. They had perched there for three years during the weaving of their fortunes, sometimes hilariously intent on the uncouth advantages of the place, overlooking, as it did, a corner of life far removed from their own, except in anxious work and vagueness in regard to the next month's rent. That was like having an uncomfortable seat at a dreary realistic play. Or again when the fount of hope got choked and ceased temporarily to bubble, they recoiled from the tawdriness of it all, and wondered whether it would not have been better for Marshall to keep his professional post in the little academy, and for Janie to go on teaching literature under him, rather than to vault the cruel barbed wire into journalism, there to throw and be overthrown.

On this July evening, the flat was feeling the heat. Janie sat in the kitchen commanding the court where her neighbors had settled themselves for prolonged hours of unreserved revel, challenging their own jaded inner forces to counteract the atmospheric enemy without. They laughed loudly at intervals, in momentary uplift when

[1] In "Vanishing Points." The Macmillan Company, N.Y., 1913.

some one of them, Janie knew through previous observation, made a foray upon a neighboring drug store, and returned with dishes of ice cream the mind shuddered to contemplate. She knew exactly how they looked, the men coatless, the women slatternly in *lingerie* waists profusely trellised with a "letting-in" of cheap lace, and the children, innocent of the dictum that boys and girls should be in retreat by the time it is dark under the table, alternating the wail of fretfulness with the shriek of an unlovely mirth. This was not one of the times when Janie could regard them all joyously as a picture of life, or warmly as a part of the great family wherein they seemed to be workers of a degree only less humble than her own. She was affronted by the city summer, tired of prolonged care, and she could but think of a circle in an ingeniously contrived inferno where lost spirits suffered not only the torture of their own habitat but that of the outcry from the one below. In a street not far away a talking machine started on its interminable jargon, chiming in terrifying commentary with her own mental lamentations. She would not have been surprised if the talking machine had broken suddenly into Brocken cries.

Proofs of a modest story long ago paid for and the proceeds eaten up, lay on the table before her, ready to be stamped and mailed, and she knew Marshall, in the front room, was poring over the last of his masterly series, a more exacting task, and therefore to be carried on in the fractionally less torrid portion of the house. Janie always insisted that she preferred the kitchen for her work because it seemed more secluded, and Marshall innocently agreed. He had not even known how she had held her breath and guarded him through the year when he was getting his

material for this set of magazine articles on Elisha Porson, the bogy of all commercial circles, execrated by thousands who had served him and then gone under when they attempted to seek out the sources of the golden flood for which they dug the channel. There was to be no overflow, they found. The drops were all to run swiftly to one hoard. So the articles, now appearing, had proved. They were in effect an attack on Porson, his methods and his personal integrity, and through him, an onslaught upon modern business.

Marshall, when he had been asked to ride forth for the slaying of Porson, had felt a high commercial triumph of his own, and with that the righteous valor of the knight-errant. Janie had known he was the man commissioned to do a big deed. The first flame of eagerness had lighted her through three-quarters of the task. What Marshall felt about it now, what immediate force was hurrying him, she did not know. Of one thing she was sure: he thought with her of the tangible reward if the articles ultimately "made good." For they were lifting an obscure magazine to an amazing circulation, and the publishers were just men. They would double and treble what he had been promised in advance, and that would mean a move from the flat overlooking the court, even a month in England benignly beckoning them, and, most of all, more work. But of these palliations to the task Janie was not thinking to-night as she leaned back in her chair, one arm lying along the table, her fingers holding the pen. She was thinking of life itself, the web embroidered by figures, Porson, and these uncouth creatures in the court, though it looked less to her like a fabric than it sometimes did, a fabric stirred by a battling wind so that the figures them-

selves moved purposely. It was in some manner alive, though formless, a savage power bent on ruin.

Marshall, in the other room, pushed back his chair, and she came to herself with an instant call upon her every-day look of watchful sympathy. She was on guard, ready to do him service from filling his pen or pipe to speeding off on desperate foraging flights for the material he might suddenly lack. She heard his slippered feet along the corridor, and then saw him before her, strong, flushed, splendid to her gaze with the distinctions she loved in him: with kind gray eyes set wide apart, the warm hair tumbling over his forehead and his comprehensive look of youth and power. Tired as he was, he looked for the moment instinct with triumph.

"Well," said he, "it's done."

"Done!" The echo was not interrogative. It seemed rather a wondering comment on such a fact.

He began a tattoo on the oven of the gas stove, and she noted idly how fine his hand was, used to athletic tasks and fitted to hold the pen.

"They'll set it up at once," she said languidly.

"Yes. I shall have the proof this week. Then we've done with Porson — done with him, done with him. *Vale*, Elisha Porson! Avaunt! Get out! You have served your turn. The tale of your iniquities is complete, and it now remains for you to get the monopoly of sack-cloth and ashes, and we will hie us from your crumbling ruins to other jobs." He was fantastically gesticulating over the sink where, in a moment, he proposed to let the water run through the filter preparatory to a cooling draught, when he turned to her for a responsive glance. He noted her pallor, the dark circles on her cheek, and

sprang to her with dismay. "Why, old girl," said he, "you're done up."

Tears were squeezing themselves out under her dropped eyelids.

"Yes," she said, "I've known myself to be ruggeder. Don't hug me here, Marsh. The court'll see us. There! I told you. Hear them yell. Come off into the den, and we can talk."

His arm about her they did go, and in the den, littered still with his cast-off manuscript, he turned the light up to see if she really looked as alarmingly bad as he feared. She was on the sofa now, her head thrown back against her lifted arms. He took his own chair and watched her, a frown between his anxious eyes. In a minute she laughed.

"I'll tell you what it is, Marsh," she said. "It's Porson. This is his revenge."

"You've got too tired over him. You've let down, now the race is over. Take it as I do. Don't say, what a devil of a time we've had with him. Say, we've done with him."

"I feel as if we never should be done with him." She opened her eyes heavily for a moment, and closed them again because they had fallen on his completed work. Something had to remind her at every turn of Elisha Porson, the adversary of mankind as she had grown to think him, and so her adversary also. But with her husband's anxious eyes upon her she was bound to help him.

"Don't you find yourself crushed by all this investigation, Marsh?" she asked. "Somehow sapped — depleted?"

He was frowning at the effort to understand.

"No," he said at once. "I feel as a lawyer does after he's won a nasty case. He hasn't enjoyed the evidence, but it's means to an end. It buys conviction. It serves justice. And for him it spells triumph."

"I can't think of the triumph just this minute. I'm certain we've learned things we wish we hadn't known."

"Nonsense! The things are. If they exist, why not know them?"

"It seems as if what we call business is a fight — a terrible fight, too terrible to look on at."

"It is." The man's confirming dictum came quick and sharp on the heels of her wavering commentary.

"I feel as if money were evil."

"So the preacher says," Marshall echoed gayly, "the root of all evil — or is it the love of it? I bet we could use a pocket full of it, allee samee."

"Do you know what Porson has made me see?"

"He's made me see a number of things. One is, that he'll be the better for a taste of brimstone. I could wish he'd had it years ago."

"He's made the world hideous."

"Oh, come, Janie! not the world."

"Yes, the world, because it wants to get on. And we shall be just like him the minute we begin to fight for money to lift us above other people — well, the people out there." She did not need to indicate the court, even with a glance. The discord of acclamation was floating toward them through the flat, and both of them thought absently that it was hailing a new consignment of ice-cream. "I'm convinced that Porson hasn't one decent humane impulse left."

"Well, if he has, I've failed to spot it. However,

let's be charitable. Let's say he never had any to begin with."

"He can't have been a monster. Remember, he supported his mother——"

"'From that date,'" Marshall quoted rhetorically, "'the date of his obtaining a position in the shoe-store, his mother ceased sewing for a living, and young Elisha supported her in a modest way, always bettering with his rising fortunes.'"

"That's it," said Janie. "He was human to start with, but now he's made himself into a machine. It goes whirling over the green grass of the world, cutting off heads."

"Can't put that in," said Marshall, who had cocked his head with an air of listening toward business ends. "Too flowery!"

"And the worst of it is, he's made me see he's not an exception. He's only noteworthy because he's got more brain than the others — more of that hideous power of tending money and making it breed. The men that fought him — they're the same kind, only they didn't win."

"The fierce light that beats upon a financier," remarked Marshall.

But she was moving him. He might stave her off, yet he, too, felt a decent recoil after the bad company they had been keeping. He, too, was morally jaded, though he would not own it. He, as became a man, was taking "the world but as the world," and yet his longings clove to the green hills of peace. His homesick eyes could not discern them in the distance. The world seemed suddenly turned into a great industrial battlefield where homely virtues were trodden out under the foot of the mercenaries hired

to fight for some Napoleon no more greedy than they, but more masterful.

"We've got our punishment for meddling with him," said Janie bitterly. "We've painted a portrait, and the picture's going to stay with us. It's hanging right here on our wall. You see it. I see it. The eyes follow us, even when we aren't looking at it."

"Don't," said Marshall involuntarily.

"Oh, it's a true portrait. I own that. We've caught the exact likeness — of a man who isn't a man any more. He's a horribly intelligent force. He can make me believe all the other men that copy him and fight him are hideous forces, too. We shall be, Marsh, if we try to keep on our feet in this awful scramble and rush. Why, I don't dare to wish we could go to Europe or even move out of here, because it means fighting for money ——"

The bell in the hall rang with a jarring dissonance. Janie started to her feet, and Marshall threw down his paper knife and went to the tube.

"Yes," she heard him say. "Who is it? Come up. Four flights."

Almost immediately he had returned to her and arrested her flight to the dark back parlor where, remembering her disarray, she was betaking herself. His face itself stopped her. It was blazing, with what emotion she could not yet tell, wonder, perhaps bitterness, an ironic gayety. His hand was heavy on her wrist.

"Who do you think it is?" he asked rapidly.

She shook her head.

"Porson himself."

"Elisha Porson?"

He nodded, the sparkling commentary of his face intensifying.

"The fool!" he breathed.

Slow, rather cautious steps were nearing on the stairs.

"What have I told you about the cleverest of men? Take them out of their own grooves and they go to pieces. He knows leather, he knows the market; but here he is walking straight into my mouth to lie down in it."

"What does he want, Marsh?" she whispered. All her own acumen had deserted her. She asked the question as simply as a child.

"Want?" Marshall repeated savagely. A terrible anticipatory triumph was in his look. "He's read the first number, perhaps the second, and he wants to buy me off — the fool!"

The steps halted at the door. Janie fled into the back room and sank on a chair. She was effectually awakened, as if by a piercing call from some emergency. It was reasonable to her, as to her husband, that Porson should want to bribe them, and even that he should innocently try it. She saw her husband with the hoard of gold laid open before him, and knew proudly he would refuse to look.

Marshall threw open the door.

"Come in, Mr. Porson," she heard him say.

Then the door closed and the varying steps, Porson's shuffling slightly as those of an old man not very painstakingly shod, and her husband's decisive, as if all his youth and scorn of paltering found expression there, came in together.

"Sit here," said Marshall, again abruptly, and took his own place at the desk.

The gas, whether by Marshall's intention or not, shone full on Porson's face, and Janie, bending forward there

in the dark, trembled at it, seeing it with an added significance in the light of her own home. She had studied his portrait in its various stages of development, the boy in the daguerreotype, with the inconsequent mouth and smooth hair, the youth beginning to show the peering shrewdness of his later years as he realized where accumulation might place him, the middle-aged man with the mean lines of greed and the rigorous ones of mastery about his eyes and mouth, and the man himself as he footed it down town in the morning, his only walk for the day before his task of incubating the eggs of riches and fighting off the others who would steal his nest. She and Marshall had worked so long over that composite portrait that Porson's features had acquired for them an exaggerated significance, and now that he had walked into their very presence, her heart beat hard at the thought that, despite hospitable honor, they might enrich the image by one line more. He laid his battered hat on the table, the tile that figured invariably in the caricatures of him, and passed a knotted hand wearily through his thin hair with the gesture fitted to locks that had begun by being thick. He started a little, and lifted his head alertly.

"Who's in there?" he asked, pointing a thumb at the back room.

"My wife," said Marshall, at once.

"I prefer to see you alone," Porson announced, with the air of one who is accustomed to getting what he asks for. It was not the full, noble note of command. His high querulous voice would never compass that. It bespoke rather the habit of a dominance necessary and tedious.

At once Janie, from no considered impulse except as the result of the directness of her own nature, bent always

on the straightest path, rose and came forward into the circle of light. Marshall got up and with a somewhat accented courtesy to mark his tenderness for her and insure her against rebuff, drew forward a chair. She stood still in the illuminated radius, a small figure, her pale golden hair drooping about her childlike face, and looked at Porson, half with an inevitable aversion and half appealingly because she wanted very much to stay. Porson regarded her for a moment, not, Marshall angrily noted, as if he saw her distinctive charm, but as if she were a figure in the path. He got up then, as if by an afterthought, not grudgingly, but because he seemed to be remembering that rising to greet a woman was a custom mysteriously decreed, and one that, leading to unknown ends, he might not neglect.

"How do you do?" he conceded, in his rasping voice. But he looked at Marshall immediately with the unaltered requirement that the figure should be removed.

"My wife is my literary partner," said Marshall, answering the glance. "She helps me collect my material and pronounces on the stuff. It's as much her work as mine."

Janie, who knew him so well, read in his air, rather than his voice, the uneasiness of thinking it would be an incalculable disappointment if Porson should refuse the gauge thrown down and say he would not speak at all. She took the matter into her own hands.

"I'll go out, Marshall," she said quickly. "Mr. Porson won't mind my being in the next room, even if I do hear. Our flat is so tiny," she explained to the visitor, with an unwilling smile — it came before she had time to think how she hated Porson — "we hear from one end of it to the other."

At that Porson turned his small eyes on her and seemed, for purposes of his own, to estimate and accept her.

"Well! well!" he said, with an impatient movement of the hands. "Well! well! But" — he raised the discordant voice a little — "this interview is confidential."

"Certainly," said Janie, with dignity. "That is understood."

She withdrew again into her solitude of the back room and sat there in a palpitating intentness.

"I don't know," Marshall was saying obstinately. "I don't know whether it's confidential. It depends on the sort of thing you've got to say."

Porson stopped him by another of those rather uncertain gestures of the hands that, wavering as they were, certainly had the effect of power. He leaned forward in his chair now and let the dramatic hands drop between his knees, while he reflected.

"You —" he began slowly, "you've printed two numbers."

"Yes," said Marshall.

There was an ugly frown between his brows. Janie, seeing it spring there and knit itself, thrilled with admiration of him and eagerness of sympathy with what he would say. Porson would propose some unworthy pact, and her husband would repudiate it. She was glad to be before the stage of that drama.

Porson looked up at Marshall with one of his quick glances that, however much they shifted, seemed to gather whatever they needed in their course.

"How much you got in type now?" he asked.

Marshall laughed a little with that ironic note fitted to his scornful look.

"Mr. Porson," said he, "what have you come to ask?"

Porson straightened now, and gazed at him. To Janie, from her oblique vantage ground, he looked like a shambling old man. Marshall, confronting the direct beam of the small eyes, found it a holding power.

"The question's here," said Porson. He opened his mouth slightly, tightened the skin of his cheek and rubbed it with a forefinger, a trick Marshall knew in sundry farmers of his acquaintance. He saw at once that it was a characteristic gesture, and put it down in his mental notebook. "I took up your two first numbers," said Porson simply, "the first of the evening, and read 'em through. I thought I'd drop in before it went any further."

"Anything wrong with my facts?" asked Marshall incisively.

Porson seemed about to answer, but he drew himself back as if with a tardy recognition that this was a species of tribunal, and that he was not obliged to incriminate himself.

"Well," he said, with deliberation, "I don't know's I've got anything to say on that score. What I pitched upon ——"

Marshall involuntarily glanced toward the inner room, and Janie, though she knew he could not see her, nodded at him in a community of delighted interest at Porson's way of expressing himself. They had both known he had a vocabulary of country phrases. He was confirming their cleverness with every word.

"What I pitched upon was this. You say towards the end of number two that later you'll go into particulars about the Blackstone Avenue land grab, and how Porson's

head clerk got ahead of him for once. Now I take it you make quite a handle of that?"

Marshall nodded, watching him.

"I go into it rather fully," he said.

"What article's it come in?"

"Number four."

"Well, Mr. Bruce," said Porson, looking him in the face, "I want you to cut that out."

Marshall laughed. Janie knew what he thought he had discovered. She, too, had hit upon it. Old Porson must have a very human foible at the bottom of his bag of tricks. He was not only a money king, avid of accumulation and the spread of his base regnancy; he was vain. He could not endure to have the world told that any man had got ahead of him.

"I should be much obliged," he was continuing, "if you'd tell me how you went into that."

"Delighted," said Marshall dryly. "I've got the article right here." He opened a drawer, and after a frowning search brought out several crumpled galleys of proof. These he whirled into order, and gave them to Porson, pointing out the significant paragraphs. Porson read slowly and painstakingly. Marshall, watching him, felt convinced that if these had been columns of figures, he could have run over them lightly with an accustomed ease; but even the plainest literature was dubitable ground.

"Yes," he said at last. "Yes. I thought that's the way you'd fix it. Well, Mr. Bruce, you've got your facts pretty clear." Marshall nodded.

"Yes," he echoed. "I've got my data. You see, Mr. Porson, men in your occupation keep leaving documentary evidence behind them. There aren't any suppositions

in these articles of mine. They're columns of cold facts. You've furnished the incidents yourself. I've only trailed along after you and picked 'em up."

But Porson did not seem to hear. He was considering, thinking out the best move to make. Finally he nodded slightly, as if in confirmation to himself, and sat up.

"Well," said he, "I guess I'll have to tell you the story of that deal."

Marshall smiled a little. The amended story would mean that Porson was explaining himself. That was an immense triumph touching a man who, whatever the popular outcry, never answered. To explain meant to excuse himself, in a way to beg for milder verdicts. If a man had wrought that upon old Porson, he had done well.

Porson was drumming noiselessly now upon the desk, keeping time as he talked, and Marshall watched the knotted fingers. Janie, out of her cage, never turned her eyes from the old man's face.

"You say he" — Porson touched the bundle of disordered proof lightly with a species of disparagement not superb enough for scorn — "you say here my clerk, Luther Tileston, got ahead of me. You say he found out before I did that Blackstone Avenue was going through the old Dumping Fields, and he cut in ahead of me and bought up that land. Well, Mr. Marshall, you're wrong. I bought that land."

"Oh, no, you didn't," said Marshall, his mind on the trapping of vanity. "The deeds stood in his name. He made a fortune. His wife and daughter are living on it to-day."

"Yes," said Porson mildly, as if in tolerance of incom-

plete methods. "But I furnished the money. I bought in Tileston's name."

"What for?"

"It didn't do for me to go into it unless I did it some such way. I'd begun to be a marked man —" a slight assertiveness animated his voice. "If I'd gone into it in the light of day, there'd have been a hundred others ready to jump and pick up all the land near by. I wanted that, too, but I hadn't the means I have now. I wasn't prepared to take it till I knew whether they were going to extend the avenue to the river front and make the drive."

"The rest was sold later," said Marshall vaguely. He was not yet sensitized. "You did buy that. But Tileston bought the first lot. He got the Dumping Fields."

"Don't I tell you I bought in his name?" inquired Porson.

"Well," said Marshall, unwillingly convinced, "so you want me to make the correction?"

"I want you to drop the whole matter."

"Why?"

There was a long pause, and Janie, watching, saw Porson's face concentrate as if he were travelling a difficult way, bordered by sadder or more serious things. Suddenly he came back.

"Tileston," said he, "was an honest man."

"Why, yes," Marshall returned, "nobody's ever known anything against Tileston. Except that land *coup*, of course. But I suppose he had a friend in the city council. I suppose he knew pretty well which way the boom was going, and it seemed to him venial to snap something up."

"He didn't have any friend in the city council," said

Porson patiently. "I had the friend — more than one of 'em. I sent Tileston abroad on business at the time of that deal. He knew no more about it than the dead. And a week after he got home he died himself."

"So, if you bought for him, as you say you did, he never knew it?"

"No." A curious expression came over Porson's face and crumpled it into another sort of document. It bespoke remembrance of the uphill paths he had travelled to his gilded cell. "Tileston never knew anything about the matter. We had a kind of an unpleasantness at that time. He got hold of some things he didn't — understand." Janie, with a light vault into the saddle of intuition, thought he had been about to say, "stand for," and on that hint coursed along after him. "In regard to the business, that is. He meant to leave me. We talked that out a day or two before he died."

"What made you let the other matter rest? Wasn't it of a sort to be settled on the dot? You couldn't have meant to leave it that way, at loose ends. The avenue was voted on in less than a month."

Porson's mouth worked a little. "I did mean to clinch it," he said. "I put it off."

Instantly Janie felt she was running back over the difficult path, her mind with his, and she thought she saw exactly how it had been. Porson was younger then, less toughened to the world's assaults, and momentarily he had found himself unable to stand before the temperamental onslaught of Tileston's scorn. Marshall, too, had his conclusions.

"He would have repudiated it?" he put in irresistibly.

Porson did not seem to hear.

"I'd only to tell him and the transfer would have been made," he averred. "Tileston was an honest man." And then, with no implication of the sequence, "He was no sort of a clerk for me. I shouldn't have taken him in the first place — but we were boys together."

"Then, when he died, the property stood in his name. You got left, so to speak."

"It stood in his name," said Porson briefly.

"Mr. Porson," said Marshall, "I wish you'd let me use this as an interview. It's magnificent copy."

"No," said Porson immovably, "I don't want you to use it and I don't want you to speak of the land. Tileston left a widow and a crippled daughter. That property appreciated."

"I should say it did!"

"They're living on it to-day. If they knew how it come — well, I don't feel sure what they'd do about it. I rather guess it wouldn't be safe."

"What makes you think so?"

"You see the widow come to me after Tileston's death. She was a kind of a high-spirited woman. Interested in charities. Wanted to reform the city government. Nice pleasant woman, too. Well, somebody'd got hold of her and told her Tileston was smart as a trap to fall in with the city government and pick up that land before the deal went through, and she come to me with tears in her eyes. Said her husband couldn't do a thing like that. If he could, she'd throw the money into the sea. Said she only hoped the firm had been doing it through him. Ready to sign it over to us. Seemed as if she couldn't do it soon enough."

"What did you say?" Marshall asked it breathlessly.

The ghost of a relaxation that might have served Porson for a smile, was wrinkling his lean face.

"I told her Tileston would have cut off his right hand before he'd have dickered with the city government."

"Did that convince her?"

"Oh, yes. She never liked me very well. Said she could trust me to tell her the worst, because if there was a chance of the property's comin' to the firm she knew I'd be eager and ready. Oh, no! She never liked me."

"And you think if she knew now ——"

"I've watched that woman a good many years. She ain't the kind of a woman you'd care so very much about —" he made that slight motion of his toward the darkness where Janie sat, and she at least knew, with a cognizance purely feminine, that he was remembering her as something to be valued — "but you'd know she'd shell out in a second if she thought the money didn't come the straight road."

"You think she'd do it now?"

"I know she would."

"And she and the crippled daughter ——"

"They'd go to the wall."

The two men sat for a minute or two in silence, Porson not even beating his impatient fingers upon the table. Janie, hearing her own hurried heart, hardly dared watch them now. When her husband spoke, hot tears came into her eyes. The tone was the one of infinite softness he was accustomed to use for her only.

"Now, you see I've mentioned the deal already. I can't take that back. I've got to speak of it again. How would it do if I should refer to it as one of those curious strokes of chance by which an honest man, not especially

itted for business, should have picked up some land nobody wanted — picked it up at the crucial moment just as the tide turned its way?"

"That's it," said Porson, with an evident relief. "But this —" he pointed to the proof which he evidently regarded with the deference of unaccustomed eyes, "this is printed."

"It hasn't gone into the magazine. I can arrange that. I can elaborate the stock transaction toward the close and put this for space."

Porson picked up the proof and began reading the concluding paragraphs. Janie slipped out into the kitchen and Marshall heard running water through the filter. He watched Porson now with a softened, even an eager, curiosity. What would it mean to the man to read the record of this other transaction, perhaps the most disgraceful, and yet legally, the safest of his whole career. Porson laid the paper down, a veiled yet retrospective look upon his face.

"Have I —" Marshall hesitated — "Mr. Porson, do you challenge that?"

But Porson, taking his hat to go, looked merely inscrutable.

"I see you've put it in '71," he answered. "Yes, April, '71. I believe that's the right date."

Janie was flying into them with a tray, two glasses and a pitcher. Her eyes held points of light. She flushed all over her face, as if at some extraordinary event.

"I made you some lemonade, Mr. Porson," she said. "Won't you try it, please?"

The request was even urgent, as if Porson could do her

the most distinct favor. He accepted a glass gravely, and drank without pause. Marshall, tasting, stopped and threw Janie a whimsical, terrified look, because she had left out the ice. Then he remembered that a part of their personal data was to the effect that Porson's unvarying beverage was unchilled lemonade, and smiled over the drink at Janie, who had scored.

Porson set down his glass.

"I'll bid you good evening," he said. He was going out, veiled again in his poor inscrutability. But Janie dashed at him, in a warm impulsive hurry.

"Good-by, Mr. Porson," she said. "Won't you shake hands?"

He looked briefly surprised; the gnarled old hand enveloped hers, and again he said good-night. They heard the shambling, undignified tread lessening down the stairs. Then they looked at each other. There were tears in Janie's eyes, and Marshall frankly swore.

"He's made it over," she said tumultuously, "the world I saw to-night. It was dark with evil, and Porson's hung a light in it."

Marshall was looking toward the door, closed upon the meagre figure. His hand lay upon the proofs where he had put all that his clever mind had been able to gather concerning another man.

"So that," he said, in a curious tone, "is Porson. That's the man himself."

ANNA MAREEA[1]

By Esther Tiffany

At the door of her low gray cottage, set in the green hollow of the hills, stood Ann M'ria. She, too, was low and gray and weather-beaten; a tiny, gnarled old woman with a hitching gait. Overhung by the spicy, purple plumes of new-blown lilacs, whose close-pressed stars brushed the worn clapboards, she waited, shading her eyes with her hand, and peering eagerly afield.

Up the pasture slope sped a flying figure. Ann M'ria caught her breath.

"It 's her! It 's doctor's wife! How pretty she sets her foot. Why, what 's she droppin' down fur on the grass? Tuckered out? She 'd oughten ter race so: one minute racin', next dead beat; that 's her all over. Guess I 'll go down the path to meet her."

A twelvemonth since something very wonderful had come into the solitary life of Ann M'ria; something for which she had hungered seventy years, — a bosom friend. And how improbable a friend! No contemporary; no withered old maid; no hard-worked farmer's daughter like herself, but a young and beautiful foreigner. She had drifted to

[1] In *The Atlantic Monthly*, August, 1902. Reprinted with permission of *The Atlantic Monthly* and the author.

Pondsville to teach music in the academy, and not Ann M'ria alone had been fired with love for her dark, pathetic eyes. The village doctor could not rest till he had transplanted this rich-hued exotic to his own dooryard. Would she strike root in the bleak New England soil?

Across the fields from Ann M'ria's house there wavered a fitful little grassy footpath, and threading this the old woman now went forth with shining eyes to meet her friend. While yet afar off she hailed her.

"Seems a thousand years sence I set eyes on ye."

With a joyous cry the doctor's wife sprang to her feet and her voice, like her face, carried with it a touch of something remote, romantic, haunting; not of the homely Yankee setting. The homely name, too, of her friend she turned to music, broadening the vowel sounds, and lingering on them with a liquid caress. Ann M'ria caught up the transfigured syllables, and half-shamefacedly tried to repeat them after her.

"An-na Mareea! An-na Mareea! Don't you dress my name up pretty! Anna Mareea! Seems kinder as if it was some one else. Tickles me to death to hear ye; but sakes, it sorter goes to my heart too, for when you say 'Anna Mareea,' I know you're thinkin' of your folks over to Germany, and when you try to say 'Ann M'ria,' says I to myself, 'Thank the Lord, she's gittin' wonted.'"

The doctor's wife pressed first one, then the other wrinkled hand of her friend to her lips, flashed out a smile through dark lashes beaded with bright salt drops, and started with her up the pasture slope.

"Got it bad to-day, ain't ye?" said Ann M'ria, an added pucker in the criss-cross furrows of her face.

"You comprehend — always. Ah, God was good to

ve me one soul in this strange land who speaks my eech."

"There, there; doctor speaks your speech, you know he es."

"Himmel, yes, if men and women can ever be said to eak the same speech, — but you — Ach Anna Maria!" Something glistened under Ann M'ria's lids, but the otesque lips widened into a quizzical smile.

"If the neighbors heard you say I talked your language ey 'd say, 'Goodness! Ann M'ria, who learnt ye to lk Dutch?' My sakes, I 'll never forgit the evenin' e did find out we spoke the same speech; that evenin' e run acrost each other in the medder at sunset and lked and talked! Next day I jest hed to keep holdin' on myself and kep' a-bustin' out singin' over my ironin', was so crazy glad to think I 'd found some one else in e world with jest my queer freaky thoughts, and that ughed and cried all in a breath same as me, and did n't ind a pile o' dirty dishes in the sink them blue days in ring that jest seem to kinder witch yer out o' doors, with l the treetops beckonin'. If it ain't a miracle o' grace; ou born over to Germany, and your folks so fine, and ou leavin' 'em and bein' an opery singer till you lost your oice; and your face like a pictur', and your hands soft pussy willows, and me a lopsided figur'-o'-fun no man ould look at twict, and yit no sooner did we two look deep to each other's eyes than somethin' speaks up loud in oth on us, sayin', 'You 're bone o' my bone and flesh o' my esh!'"

"I love you!" said the doctor's wife.

By this time they had reached the tiny front yard, blue ith trailing periwinkle and sweet with lilac and flowering

currant, and, it being too golden a day to waste indoors Ann M'ria seated herself on the worn kitchen sill and drew the friend of her bosom down beside her.

"I s'pose livin' here and livin' over to Germany or Italy 's somethin' like the difference between Ann M'ria and Anna Mareea; and Mis' Smith, that folks hev to call you now, don't sound half so pretty as what you used to be called, Alma von Engelberg — angel-mountain you said that meant? — but then there 's doctor; I don't suppose they could beat doctor easy over there."

The doctor's wife shook her head and flung out both expressive hands.

"There 's not one of them over there fit to clasp the latchet of his shoes!" Then she drooped against Ann M'ria's shoulder. "That makes it all the worse," she sighed.

"Why all the worse?"

"That I grow restless and wild and cross, and hate the people, — Himmel! They are the kindest people in the world when you get beneath the crust, — and hate the sewing society and the 'sociables.' Gott, do you know how to be 'sociable,' you New Englanders? and then, the meeting-house, so cold, so bare, so hideous! Oh, don't think I complain to my husband; I have grace enough not to do that, but, oh, Anna Maria, it grows worse instead of better, this restlessness. What shall I do? What shall I do?"

The shrewd old eyes rested for an instant on the languid figure nestled against her own.

"Mebbe it 's jest the spring feelin', dear, and mebbe — You talk to doctor; don't you fret all alone; you tell everythin' to doctor."

"The hills! They shut me in; I can't breathe! Oh, o push them away; there are cities beyond; something loing; not utter stagnation. Though what should I want of cities and crowds; I had sorrow enough out in the world, and when my voice failed, all I asked for was to orget the world and be forgotten, and so I crept to this quiet corner to end my days in what peace I might."

The doorway of the solitary little house, fronting sunset and mountain, commanded the windings of the osiered iver that leads the eye on and on, till, companioned by he narrowing valley, the glinting waters slip behind a oothill. Then the eye, baffled, falls back yearning to know vhat lies beyond.

"Yes," said Ann M'ria slowly, her wistful gaze riveted on the furrowed and forest-dark flanks of Chillion, majestic even in the all-revealing midday glare, "yes, you 've hed your fling; you 've seen it all, but here I 've ben seventy years, girl and woman, eatin' my heart out for jest one peep t'other side o' them mountains."

The doctor's wife caught at her friend's hand.

"What! You have never been beyond!"

"How should I git there? Walk, with my hitchin' gait? And I ain't never hed no team nor extry pennies to hire."

"Your neighbors?"

"Oh, I 've good neighbors; but you don't tell everythin' o your neighbors."

"Anna Maria! Seventy years! Such a little wish."

The doctor's wife had slipped to her knees by Ann M'ria's side; she was fondling her friend's hands, pressing hem to her soft check wet with tears. The old woman ooked down at her with chiding love.

"There, there, you 're all flushed up, and you 've forgo all about your own sorror, thinkin' o' mine. That ' why folks love you so ; that 's why all the folks to the villag set sech store by ye, and you a furriner."

"Do they like me?"

"Now don't you go pertendin' you did n't know it 'T ain't only that you 've got the feelin' heart, but you knov how to show it so pretty. Now what you jumpin' up t so fast for?"

Alma had started to her feet, and was pointing eagerly down the road where a swaying buggy top was emerging from the beech wood.

"It 's my husband. He said perhaps he could b free this afternoon. Oh, Anna Maria, it is early yet to-day, this very day you shall have the desire of you heart."

Ann M'ria stood as if rooted to the door sill.

"To-day! The mountain! To-day?"

The sturdy white horse and the broad-shouldered mar driving him were drawing steadily nearer. They hac passed the last farm and pink-flushed orchard, and were turning into the lane that led up over the pastures. Ann M'ria clutched Alma's sleeve.

"Not to-day, dear; not to-day." She was visibly trembling.

"Why not to-day?"

"Seventy years I 've waited."

"Then why put it off an hour? The time has come."

Ann M'ria fingered her calico dress distressfully, and her eyes sought her friend's in solemn appeal.

"I could n't go in these old duds."

"There is time to change your dress."

"I 'd always kinder thought — if ever the time come — I 'd like to wear my black silk that was mother's."

"By all means, the black silk."

"And my best bunnit?"

"Oh yes, the best bonnet."

"And grandmother's gold beads?"

"Above all, your gold beads."

Ann M'ria made one step toward the bedroom, then turned with working face.

"You think it better be to-day?" she asked with the submissive questioning of a child.

"Yes, yes, to-day. Go and make ready, Anna Maria, while I tell my husband."

Outside the low paling the white horse had come to a halt, and in a moment more, Alma, her vivid face raised to the doctor's, had poured out her tale. He nodded once or twice, but it was evident his thoughts were more engaged with his wife than with the story she was rehearsing so dramatically. Touching her flushed cheek with a practiced hand, he told her to ask Ann M'ria for a glass of milk before they started, and to bring along bread and doughnuts or whatever the larder might afford.

Despite previous tremors, despite the glories of the black silk dress, the best "bunnit," and the golden heirloom clasping her wrinkled throat, who gayer after the start than Ann M'ria. In the capacious seat her slight figure was easily tucked away between her friends, and now her hand clasped Alma's, now rested on the doctor's knee, now for pure joy waved in the air.

"Hear the song sparrers trillin'! There war'n't never sech a hand as me for lovin' singin' in bird or human creeter. Seems 's if I could set and hear singin' till my

soul melted away. They was a hymn they used to sing." — And in a quavering treble Ann M'ria shrilled it out, —

"'There 's a land that is fairer than day.'

And then there 's the singin' of the kittle, and even cake, when you draw it out of the oven and put your ear down to it, there 't is chirrupin' away to itself. Yes, I was always a great hand for singin', and I guess that 's why I always hated my name so; seemed so harsh soundin', and why I jest love to hear you say Anna Mareea, — same as if you was puttin' it to music. Say it again, Mis' Smith."

"Anna Maria, dear, dear Anna Maria."

"I guess I 'm two folks; Ann M'ria and Anna Mareea. Ann M'ria 's the one most folks see, twisted and homely 's a root, and Anna Mareea 's the insides of me that when folks git a peep of they think 's queer and flighty. I 've days of being jest plain Ann M'ria and dustin' and bakin' and sortin' herbs as contented as a rabbit in a clover field, but them other days, when the sight of a dishcloth turns my stomach, and somethin' seems to be prickin' in me like cider fermentin', and I don't understand what I do want no more than I was talkin' a furrin language, then I guess I 'm Anna Mareea. Don't you let on to Dick, doctor, — there 's two of me he 's got to draw up the mountain road, — or he 'll git discouraged.

"Last night I run out before bedtime, and it was all so still and clean washed, sort of, and the stars so solemn, and I set me down by the well, and little by little they was all around me, father and mother and my three sisters that died before I was born, and I hed n't a fear, and my soul seemed swellin' in me, and I guess I set a full hour thinkin'

how beautiful 't was, and I would n't never bother no more about earthly things, when all of a suddin somethin' in me spoke up, commonplace as you please, and says, 'That 'll do, Ann M'ria, you 've hed all you can stand. And your shoes are soppin' wet in the dew. Go in and soak your feet and git to bed.' And I done it. We ain't nothin' but pint pots, after all!"

The road which the doctor had chosen struck across the valley and then wound up to the high gap between the shoulder of Chillion and a lesser neighbor. Undaunted, though with drooping head, the white horse toiled steadily on, his master to ease him striding alongside. Half the valley, unrolled below them, lay in shadow, but back on the opposite slopes the mellow light yet lingered, and Ann M'ria's cottage, catching the sun on its panes, flashed recognition. The doctor pointed toward it with his whip, and the old woman nodded solemnly. Silence had fallen upon her. Her hands clasped in her lap, she rode toward the supreme moment of her life. A moment more, and from the crest of the ridge the new world would burst upon her sight.

"Stop!" she broke out suddenly and with a quavering voice. The doctor checked his horse. "Doctor, I want to git out."

"Would you rather walk the rest of the way?"

"I ain't goin' no further.'

"Not going any farther?"

Ann M'ria shook her head. "You 've been awful good, but I can't go a step further."

"Dear," said the doctor's wife, "are you ill?"

"No, no, Mis' Smith, I ain't sick. I know it seems dretful of me after you 've hauled me so fur, and doctor

he won't never understand it mebbe, but you will, you will, won't you, dear?"

The old woman in her limp black silk was clambering nervously out of the buggy, and turned a pathetically pleading face toward the friend of her bosom.

"Everythin' I 've made believe all my life was behind the mountain; all the things I 've hed to do without. It 's too late; my eyes are too old; I could n't see it as I 've made believe all my life; I 'd ruther go on makin' believe and seein' it as I always hev; all shinin' so beautiful; a land flowin' with milk and honey; great gleamin' rivers and mountains clear up to the sky with snow on 'em, and marble cities with church towers with angels carved on to 'em like I 've read, and somewhere among 'em all a little white farmhouse under some elms with a pass'l of children runnin' in and out, not favorin' me exactly, but favorin' what I might hev looked like if the Lord hed n't made me on an off day. Don't make me go up to the top of the ridge, dear; don't make me go!"

"Dear Anna Maria, no one shall."

"You go up with doctor and hev your look off, and I 'll set here and mind Dick. It 's a dretful pretty evenin' to be settin' out with the trees so still they jest seem to be holdin' on to themselves so 's not to stir and wake the baby birds. Take your time, dear, take your time."

* * * * * * *

It must indeed have been a sight of the Promised Land — their own or Ann M'ria's — that met the eyes of the doctor and his wife from the crest of the ridge road, for when they returned, hand in hand, the witness of the glory still shone transfiguring in their eyes. The old woman read

it there, and started exultant from the low stone wall where she had been sitting.

"Then it 's all true," she cried, "it 's true: You seen it! My! but it must 'a' ben beautiful to make your eyes shine like that!"

THE INTERVENTION OF PETER[1]

By Paul Laurence Dunbar

No one knows just what statement it was of Harrison Randolph's that Rob Lee doubted. The annals of these two Virginia families have not told us that. But these are the facts: —

It was at the home of the Fairfaxes that a few of the sons of the Old Dominion were giving a dinner, — not to celebrate anything in particular, but the joyousness of their own souls, — and a brave dinner it was. The courses had come and gone, and over their cigars they had waxed more than merry. In those days men drank deep, and these men were young, full of the warm blood of the South and the joy of living. What wonder then that the liquor that had been mellowing in the Fairfax cellars since the boyhood of their revolutionary ancestor should have its effect upon them?

It is true that it was only a slight thing which Bob Lee affected to disbelieve, and that his tone was jocosely bantering rather than impertinent. But sometimes Virginia heads are not less hot than Virginia hearts. The two young men belonged to families that had intermarried.

[1] In "Folks from Dixie." Dodd, Mead and Company, N. Y., 1898. Reprinted by permission.

They rode together. They hunted together, and were friends as far as two men could be who had read the message of love in the dark eyes of the same woman. So perhaps there was some thought of the long-contested hand of Miss Sallie Ford in Harrison Randolph's mind when he chose to believe that his honor had been assailed.

His dignity was admirable. There was no scene to speak of. It was all very genteel.

"Mr. Lee," he said, "had chosen to doubt his word, which to a gentleman was the final insult. But he felt sure that Mr. Lee would not refuse to accord him a gentleman's satisfaction." And the other's face had waxed warm and red and his voice cold as he replied: "I shall be most happy to give you the satisfaction you demand."

Here friends interposed and attempted to pacify the two. But without avail. The wine of the Fairfaxes has a valiant quality in it, and these two who had drunken of it could not be peaceably reconciled.

Each of the young gentlemen nodded to a friend and rose to depart. The joyous dinner-party bade fair to end with much more serious business.

"You shall hear from me very shortly," said Randolph, as he strode to the door.

"I shall await your pleasure with impatience, sir, and give you such a reply as even you cannot disdain."

It was all rather high-flown, but youth is dramatic and plays to the gallery of its own eyes and ears. But to one pair of ears there was no ring of anything but tragedy in the grandiloquent sentences. Peter, the personal attendant of Harrison Randolph, stood at the door as his master passed out, and went on before him to hold his stirrup. The young master and his friend and cousin, Dale, started

off briskly and in silence, while Pete, with wide eyes and disturbed face, followed on behind. Just as they were turning into the avenue of elms that led to their own house, Randolph wheeled his horse and came riding back to his servant.

"Pete," said he, sternly, "what do you know?"

"Nuffin', Mas' Ha'ison, nuffin' 't all. I do' know nuffin'."

"I don't believe you." The young master's eyes were shining through the dusk. "You 're always slipping around spying on me."

"Now dah you goes, Mas' Randolph. I ain't done a t'ing, and you got to 'mence pickin' on me —"

"I just want you to remember that my business is mine."

"Well, I knows dat."

"And if you do know anything, it will be well for you to begin forgetting right now." They were at the door now and in the act of dismounting. "Take Bess around and see her attended to. Leave Dale's horse here, and — I won't want you any more to-night."

"Now how does you an' Mas' Dale 'spect dat you gwine to wait on yo'se'ves to-night?"

"I shall not want you again to-night, I tell you."

Pete turned away with an injured expression on his dark face. "Bess," he said to the spirited black mare as he led her toward the stables, "you jes' bettah t'ank yo' Makah dat you ain't no human-bein', 'ca'se human-bein's is cur'ous articles. Now you 's a hoss, ain't you? An' dey say you ain't got no soul, but you got sense, Bess, you got sense. You got blood an' fiah an' breedin' in you too, ain't you? Co'se you has. But you knows how to

answah de rein. You 's a high steppah, too: but you don' go to work an' try to brek yo' naik de fus' chanst you git. Bess, I 'spect you 'ca'se you got jedgment, an' you don' have to have a black man runnin' 'roun aftah you all de time plannin' his haid off jes' to keep you out o' trouble. Some folks dat 's human-bein's does. Yet an' still, Bess, you ain't nuffin' but a dumb beas', so dey says. Now, what I gwine to do? Co'se dey wants to fight. But whah an' when an' how I gwine to stop hit? Do' want me to wait on him to-night, huh! No, dey want to mek dey plans an' do' want me 'roun' to hyeah, dat 's what 's de mattah. Well, I lay I 'll hyeah somep'n' anyhow."

Peter hurried through his work and took himself up to the big house and straight to his master's room. He heard voices within, but though he took many liberties with his owner, eavesdropping was not one of them. It proved too dangerous. So, though "he kinder lingered on the mat, some doubtful of the sekle," it was not for long, and he unceremoniously pushed the door open and walked in. With a great show of haste, he made for his master's wardrobe and began busily searching among the articles therein. Harrison Randolph and his cousin were in the room, and their conversation, which had been animated, suddenly ceased when Peter entered.

"I thought I told you I did n't want you any more to-night."

"I 's a-lookin' fu' dem striped pants o' yo'n. I want to tek 'em out an' bresh 'em: dey 's p'intly a livin' sight."

"You get out o' here."

"But, Mas' Ha'ison, now — now — look — a — hyeah —"

"Get out, I tell you —"

Pete shuffled from the room, mumbling as he went: "Dah now, dah now! driv' out lak a dog! How 's I gwine to fin' out anyt'ing dis away? It do 'pear lak Mas' Ha'ison do try to gi'e me all de trouble he know how. Now he plannin' an' projickin' wif dat cousin Dale, an' one jes' ez scattah-brained ez de othah. Well, I 'low I got to beat dey time somehow or ruther."

He was still lingering hopeless and worried about the house when he saw young Dale Randolph come out, mount his horse and ride away. After a while his young master also came out and walked up and down in the soft evening air. The rest of the family were seated about on the broad piazza.

"I wonder what is the matter with Harrison to-night," said the young man's father, "he seems so pre-occupied."

"Thinking of Sallie Ford, I reckon," some one replied; and the remark passed with a laugh. Pete was near enough to catch this, but he did not stop to set them right in their conjectures. He slipped into the house as noiselessly as possible.

It was less than two hours after this when Dale Randolph returned and went immediately to his cousin's room, where Harrison followed him.

"Well?" said the latter, as soon as the door closed behind them.

"It 's all arranged, and he 's anxious to hurry it through for fear some one may interfere. Pistols, and to-morrow morning at daybreak."

"And the place?"

"The little stretch of woods that borders Ford's Creek. I say, Harrison, it is n't too late to stop this thing yet. It 's

a shame for you two fellows to fight. You 're both too decent to be killed for a while yet."

"He insulted me."

"Without intention, every one believes."

"Then let him apologise."

"As well ask the devil to take Communion."

"We 'll fight then."

"All right. If you must fight, you must. But you 'd better get to bed; for you 'll need a strong arm and a steady hand to-morrow."

If a momentary paleness struck into the young fellow's face, it was for a moment only, and he set his teeth hard before he spoke.

"I am going to write a couple of letters," he said, "then I shall lie down for an hour or so. Shall we go down and drink a steadier?"

"One won't hurt, of course."

"And, by the way, Dale, if I — if it happens to be me to-morrow, you take Pete — he 's a good fellow."

The cousins clasped hands in silence and passed out. As the door closed behind them, a dusty form rolled out from under the bed, and the disruptable, eavesdropping, backsliding Pete stood up and rubbed a sleeve across his eyes.

"It ain't me dat 's gwine to be give to nobody else. I hates to do it, but dey ain't no othah way. Mas' Ha'ison cain't be spaihed." He glided out mysteriously, some plan of salvation working in his black head.

Just before daybreak next morning, three stealthy figures crept out and made their way toward Ford's Creek. One skulked behind the other two, dogging their steps

and taking advantage of the darkness to keep very near to them. At the grim trysting-place they halted and were soon joined by other stealthy figures, and together they sat down to wait for the daylight. The seconds conferred for a few minutes. The ground was paced off, and a few low-pitched orders prepared the young men for business.

"I will count three, gentlemen," said Lieutenant Custis. "At three, you are to fire."

At last daylight came, gray and timid at first, and then red and bold as the sun came clearly up. The pistols were examined and the men placed face to face.

"Are you ready, gentlemen?"

But evidently Harrison Randolph was not. He was paying no attention to the seconds. His eyes were fixed on an object behind his opponent's back. His attitude relaxed and his mouth began twitching. Then he burst into a peal of laughter.

"Pete," he roared, "drop that and come out from there!" and away he went into another convulsion of mirth. The others turned just in time to see Pete cease his frantic grimaces of secrecy at his master, and sheepishly lower an ancient fowling-piece which he had had levelled at Bob Lee.

"What were you going to do with that gun levelling at me?" asked Lee, his own face twitching.

"I was gwine to fiah jes' befo' dey said free. I wa'n't gwine to kill you, Mas' Bob. I was on'y gwine to lame you."

Another peal of laughter from the whole crowd followed this condescending statement.

"You unconscionable scoundrel, you! If I was your master, I 'd give you a hundred lashes."

"Pete," said his master, "don't you know that it is dishonorable to shoot a man from behind? You see you have n't in you the making of a gentleman."

"I do' know nuffin' 'bout mekin' a gent'man, but I does know how to save one dat 's already made."

The prime object of the meeting had been entirely forgotten. They gathered around Pete and examined the weapon.

"Gentlemen," said Randolph, "we have been saved by a miracle. This old gun, as well as I can remember and count, has been loaded for the past twenty-five years, and if Pete had tried to fire it, it would have torn up all of this part of the county." Then the eyes of the two combatants met. There was something irresistibly funny in the whole situation, and they found themselves roaring again. Then, with one impulse, they shook hands without a word.

And Pete led the way home, the willing butt of a volume of good-natured abuse.

A CHRISTMAS PRESENT FOR A LADY[1]

By Myra Kelly

It was the week before Christmas, and the First Reader Class, in a lower East Side school, had, almost to a man, decided on the gifts to be lavished on "Teacher." She was quite unprepared for any such observance on the part of her small adherents, for her first study of the roll book had shown her that its numerous Jacobs, Isidores, and Rachels belonged to a class to which Christmas Day was much as other days. And so she went serenely on her way, all unconscious of the swift and strict relation between her manner and her chances. She was, for instance, the only person in the room who did not know that her criticism of Isidore Belchatosky's hands and face cost her a tall "three for ten cents" candlestick and a plump box of candy.

But Morris Mogilewsky, whose love for Teacher was far greater than the combined loves of all the other children, had as yet no present to bestow. That his "kind feeling" should be without proof when the lesser loves of Isidore Wishnewsky, Sadie Gonorowsky, and Bertha Binderwitz were taking the tangible but surprising forms

[1] In *Little Citizens*. Doubleday, Page and Company. 1913. Reprinted by permission.

which were daily exhibited to his confidential gaze was more than he could bear. The knowledge saddened all his hours, and was the more maddening because it could in no wise be shared by Teacher, who noticed his altered bearing and tried with all sorts of artful beguilements to make him happy and at ease. But her efforts served only to increase his unhappiness and his love. And he loved her! Oh, how he loved her! Since first his dreading eyes had clung for a breath's space to her "like man's shoes" and had then crept timidly upward past a black skirt, a "from silk" apron, a red "jumper," and "from gold" chain to her "light face," she had been mistress of his heart of hearts. That was more than three months ago. How well he remembered the day!

His mother had washed him horribly, and had taken him into the big red schoolhouse, so familiar from the outside, but so full of unknown terrors within. After his dusty little shoes had stumbled over the threshold he had passed from ordeal to ordeal until, at last, he was torn in mute and white-faced despair from his mother's skirts.

He was then dragged through long halls and up tall stairs by a large boy, who spoke to him disdainfully as "greenie," and cautioned him as to the laying down softly and taking up gently of those poor, dusty shoes, so that his spirit was quite broken and his nerves were all unstrung when he was pushed into a room full of bright sunshine and of children who laughed at his frightened little face. The sunshine smote his timid eyes, the laughter smote his timid heart, and he turned to flee. But the door was shut, the large boy gone, and despair took him for its own.

Down upon the floor he dropped, and wailed, and wept, and kicked. It was then that he heard, for the

first time, the voice which now he loved. A hand was forced between his aching body and the floor, and the voice said:

"Why, my dear little chap, you mustn't cry like that. What's the matter?"

The hand was gentle and the question kind, and these, combined with a faint perfume suggestive of drug stores and barber shops — but nicer than either — made him uncover his hot little face. Kneeling beside him was a lady, and he forced his eyes to that perilous ascent; from shoes to skirt, from skirt to jumper, from jumper to face, they trailed in dread uncertainty, but at the face they stopped — they had found rest.

Morris allowed himself to be gathered into the lady's arms and held upon her knee, and when his sobs no longer rent the very foundations of his pink and wide-spread tie, he answered her question in a voice as soft as his eyes, and as gently sad.

"I ain't so big, and I don't know where is my mama."

So, having cast his troubles on the shoulders of the lady, he had added his throbbing head to the burden, and from that safe retreat had enjoyed his first day at school immensely.

Thereafter he had been the first to arrive every morning, and the last to leave every afternoon; and, under the care of Teacher, his liege lady, he had grown in wisdom and love and happiness, but the greatest of these was love. And now, when the other boys and girls were planning surprises and gifts of price for Teacher, his hands were as empty as his heart was full. Appeal to his mother met with denial prompt and energetic.

"For what you go and make, over Christmas, presents?

You ain't no Krisht; you should better have no kind feelings over Krishts, neither; your papa could to have a mad."

"Teacher ain't no Krisht," said Morris stoutly; "all the other fellows buys her presents, und I'm loving mit her; it's polite I gives her presents the while I'm got such a kind feeling over her."

"Well, we ain't got no money for buy nothing," said Mrs. Mogilewsky sadly. "No money, und your papa, he has all times a scare he shouldn't to get no more, the while the boss" — and here followed incomprehensible, but depressing, financial details, until the end of the interview found Morris and his mother sobbing and rocking in one another's arms. So Morris was helpless, his mother poor, and Teacher all unknowing.

And now the great day, the Friday before Christmas, has come, and the school is, for the first half hour, quite mad. Doors open suddenly and softly to admit small persons, clad in wondrous ways and bearing wondrous parcels. Room 18, generally so placid and so peaceful, is a howling wilderness full of brightly-colored, quickly-changing groups of children, all whispering, all gurgling, and all hiding queer bundles. A new-comer invariably causes a diversion; the assembled multitude, athirst for novelty, falls upon him and clamors for a glimpse of his bundle and a statement of its price.

Teacher watches in dumb amaze. What can be the matter with the children? They can't have guessed that the shrouded something in the corner is a Christmas tree? What makes them behave so queerly, and why do they look so strange? They seem to have grown stout

in a single night, and Teacher, as she notes this, marvels greatly. The explanation is simple, though it comes in alarming form. The sounds of revelry are pierced by a long, shrill yell, and a pair of agitated legs spring suddenly into view between two desks. Teacher, rushing to the rescue, notes that the legs form the unsteady stem of an upturned mushroom of brown flannel and green braid, which she recognizes as the outward seeming of her cherished Bertha Binderwitz; and yet, when the desks are forced to disgorge their prey, the legs restored to their normal position are found to support a fat child — and Bertha was best described as "skinny" — in a dress of the Stuart tartan tastefully trimmed with purple. Investigation proves that Bertha's accumulative taste in dress is an established custom. In nearly all cases the glory of holiday attire is hung upon the solid foundation of every-day clothes as bunting is hung upon a building. The habit is economical of time, and produces a charming embonpoint.

Teacher, too, is more beautiful than ever. Her dress is blue, and "very long down, like a lady," with bands of silk and scraps of lace distributed with the eye of art. In her hair she wears a bow of what Sadie Gonorowsky, whose father "works by fancy goods," describes as "black from plush ribbon — costs ten cents."

Isidore Belchatosky, relenting, is the first to lay tribute before Teacher. He comes forward with a sweet smile and a tall candlestick — the candy had gone to its long home, — and Teacher for a moment cannot be made to understand that all that length of bluish-white china is really hers "for keeps."

"It's to-morrow holiday," Isidore assures her; "and

ve gives you presents, the while we have a kind feeling. Candlesticks could to cost twenty-five cents."

"It's a lie. Three for ten," says a voice in the background, but Teacher hastens to respond to Isidore's test of her credulity:

"Indeed, they could. This candlestick could have cost ifty cents, and it's just what I want. It is very good of ou to bring me a present."

"You're welcome," says Isidore, retiring; and then, he ice being broken, the First Reader Class in a body rises o cast its gifts on Teacher's desk, and its arms round Teacher's neck.

Nathan Horowitz presents a small cup and saucer; sidore Applebaum bestows a large calendar for the year efore last; Sadie Gonorowsky brings a basket containing bottle of perfume, a thimble, and a bright silk handkerhief; Sarah Schodsky offers a pen-wiper and a yellow elluloid collar-button, and Eva Kidansky gives an elaboate nasal douche, under the pleasing delusion that it is an tomizer.

Once more sounds of grief reach Teacher's ears. Rushng again to the rescue, she throws open the door and comes pon woe personified. Eva Gonorowsky, her hair in wildst disarray, her stocking fouled, ungartered, and downyved to her ankle, appears before her teacher. She ears all the marks of Hamlet's excitement, and many nore, including a tear-stained little face and a gilt saucer lasped to a panting breast.

"Eva, my dearest Eva, what's happened to you *now?*" sks Teacher, for the list of ill chances which have befallen his one of her charges is very long. And Eva wails orth that a boy, a very big boy, had stolen her golden cup

"what I had for you by present," and has left her only the saucer and her undying love to bestow.

Before Eva's sobs have quite yielded to Teacher's arts, Jacob Spitsky presses forward with a tortoise-shell comb of terrifying aspect and hungry teeth, and an air showing forth a determination to adjust it in its destined place. Teacher meekly bows her head; Jacob forces his offering into her long-suffering hair, and then retires with the information, "Costs fifteen cents, Teacher," and the courteous phrase — by etiquette prescribed — "Wish you health to wear it." He is plainly a hero, and is heard remarking to less favored admirers, that "Teacher's hair is awful softly, and smells off of perfumery."

Here a big boy, a very big boy, enters hastily. He does not belong to Room 18, but he has long known Teacher. He has brought her a present; he wishes her a merry Christmas. The present, when produced, proves to be a pretty gold cup, and Eva Gonorowsky, with renewed emotion, recognizes the boy as her assailant and the cup as her property. Teacher is dreadfully embarrassed; the boy not at all so. His policy is simple and entire denial, and in this he perseveres, even after Eva's saucer has unmistakably proclaimed its relationship to the cup.

Meanwhile the rush of presentation goes steadily on. Other cups and saucers come in wild profusion. The desk is covered with them, and their wrappings of purple tissue paper require a monitor's whole attention. The soap, too, becomes urgently perceptible. It is of all sizes, shapes, and colors, but of uniform and dreadful power of perfume. Teacher's eyes fill with tears of gratitude as each new piece or box, is pressed against her nose, and Teacher's mind is full of wonder as to what she can ever do with all of it.

Bottles of perfume vie with one another and with the all-pervading soap until the air is heavy and breathing grows laborious, while pride swells the hearts of the assembled multitude. No other teacher has so many helps to the toilet. None other is so beloved.

Teacher's aspect is quite changed, and "the blue long down like a lady dress" is almost hidden by the offerings she has received. Jacob's comb has two massive and be-eweled rivals in the "softy hair." The front of the dress, where aching or despondent heads are wont to rest, is glittering with campaign buttons of American celebrities, beginning with James G. Blaine and extending into modern history as far as Patrick Divver, Admiral Dewey, and Captain Dreyfus. Outside the blue belt is a white one, nearly clean, and bearing in "sure 'nough golden words" the curt, but stirring, invitation, "Remember the Maine." Around the neck are three chaplets of beads, wrought by chubby fingers and embodying much love, while the waist-line is further adorned by tiny and beribboned aprons. Truly, it is a day of triumph.

When the waste-paper basket has been twice filled with wrappings and twice emptied; when order is emerging out of chaos; when the Christmas tree has been disclosed and its treasures distributed, a timid hand is laid on Teacher's knee and a plaintive voice whispers, "Say, Teacher, I got something for you;" and Teacher turns quickly to see Morris, her dearest boy charge, with his poor little body showing quite plainly between his shirt-waist buttons and through the gashes he calls pockets. This is his ordinary costume, and the funds of the house of Mogilewsky are evidently unequal to an outer layer of finery.

"Now, Morris, dear," says Teacher, "you shouldn't

have troubled to get me a present; you know you and I are such good friends that —"

"Teacher, yis ma'am," Morris interrupts, in a bewitching rising inflection of his soft and plaintive voice: "I know you got a kind feeling by me, and I couldn't to tell even how I'm got a kind feeling by you. Only it's about that kind feeling I should give you a present. I didn't" — with a glance at the crowded desk — "I didn't to have no soap nor no perfumery, and my mama, she couldn't to buy none by the store; but, Teacher, I'm got something awful nice for you by present."

"And what is it, deary?" asks the already rich and gifted young person. "What is my new present?"

"Teacher, it's like this: I don't know; I ain't so big like I could to know" — and, truly, God pity him! he is passing small — "It ain't for boys — it's for ladies. Over yesterday on the night comes my papa on my house, und he gives my mama the present. Sooner she looks on it, sooner she has a awful glad; in her eyes stands tears, und she says, like that — out of Jewish — 'Thanks,' un' she kisses my papa a kiss. Und my papa, *how* he is polite! he says — out of Jewish, too — 'You're welcome, all right,' un' he kisses my mama a kiss. So my mama, she sets and looks on the present, und all the time she looks she has a glad over it. Und I didn't to have no soap, so you could to have the present."

"But did your mother say I might?"

"Teacher, no ma'am; she didn't say like that, un' she didn't to say *not* like that. She didn't to know. But it's for ladies, un' I didn't to have no soap. You could to look on it. It ain't for boys."

And here Morris opens a hot little hand and discloses a

ightly-folded pinkish paper. As Teacher reads it he atches her with eager, furtive eyes, dry and bright, until ers grow suddenly moist, when his promptly follow suit. s she looks down at him, he makes his moan once more:

"It's for ladies, und I didn't to have no soap."

"But, Morris, dear," cries Teacher unsteadily, laughing little, and yet not far from tears, "this is ever so much icer than soap — a thousand times better than perfume; nd you're quite right, it is for ladies, and I never had one n all my life before. I am so very thankful."

"You're welcome, all right. That's how my papa says; 's polite," says Morris proudly. And proudly he takes is place among the very little boys, and loudly he joins n the ensuing song. For the rest of that exciting day he a shining point of virtue in a slightly confused class. nd at three o'clock he is at Teacher's desk again, carrying n the conversation as if there had been no interruption.

"Und my mama," he says insinuatingly — "she kisses ıy papa a kiss."

"Well?" says Teacher.

"Well," says Morris, "you ain't never kissed me a kiss, nd I seen how you kissed Eva Gonorowsky. I'm loving ıit you too. Why don't you never kiss me a kiss?"

"Perhaps," suggests Teacher mischievously, "perhaps ain't for boys."

But a glance at her "light face," with its crown of surising combs, reassures him.

"Teacher, yis ma'am; it's for boys," he cries as he feels er arms about him, and sees that in her eyes, too, "stands ears."

"It's polite you kisses me a kiss over that for ladies' resent."

Late that night Teacher sat in her pretty room — for she was, unofficially, a greatly pampered young person — and reviewed her treasures. She saw that they were very numerous, very touching, very whimsical, and very precious. But above all the rest she cherished a frayed pinkish paper, rather crumpled and a little soiled. For it held the love of a man and woman and a little child, and the magic of a home, for Morris Mogilewsky's Christmas present for ladies was the receipt for a month's rent for a room on the top floor of a Monroe Street tenement.

WEE WILLIE WINKIE

By Rudyard Kipling

"An officer and a gentleman."

His full name was Percival William Williams, but he picked up the other name in a nursery-book, and that was the end of the christened titles. His mother's *ayah* called him Willie-*Baba*, but as he never paid the faintest attention to anything that the *ayah* said, her wisdom did not help matters.

His father was the colonel of the 195th, and as soon as Wee Willie Winkie was old enough to understand what military discipline meant, Colonel Williams put him under it. There was no other way of managing the child. When he was good for a week, he drew good-conduct pay; and when he was bad, he was deprived of his good-conduct stripe. Generally he was bad, for India offers so many chances to the little six-year olds of going wrong.

Children resent familiarity from strangers, and Wee Willie Winkie was a very particular child. Once he accepted an acquaintance, he was graciously pleased to thaw. He accepted Brandis, a subaltern of the 195th, on sight. Brandis was having tea at the colonel's, and Wee Willie Winkie entered, strong in the possession of a good-conduct

badge won for not chasing the hens round the compound. He regarded Brandis with gravity for at least ten minutes, and then delivered himself of his opinion.

"I like you," said he, slowly, getting off his chair and coming over to Brandis. "I like you. I shall call you Coppy, because of your hair. Do you *mind* being called Coppy? It is because of ve hair, ye know."

Here was one of the most embarrassing of Wee Willie Winkie's peculiarities. He would look at a stranger for some time, and then, without warning or explanations, would give him a name. And the name stuck. No regimental penalties could break Wee Willie Winkie of this habit. He lost his good-conduct badge for christening the commissioner's wife "Pobs"; but nothing that the colonel could do made the station forego the nickname, and Mrs. Collen remained Mrs. "Pobs" till the end of her stay. So Brandis was christened "Coppy," and rose, therefore, in the estimation of the regiment.

If Wee Willie Winkie took an interest in any one, the fortunate man was envied alike by the mess and the rank and file. And in their envy lay no suspicion of self-interest. "The colonel's son" was idolized on his own merits entirely. Yet Wee Willie Winkie was not lovely. His face was permanently freckled, as his legs were permanently scratched, and in spite of his mother's almost tearful remonstrances he had insisted upon having his long yellow locks cut short in the military fashion. "I want my hair like Sergeant Tummil's," said Wee Willie Winkie, and his father abetting, the sacrifice was accomplished.

Three weeks after the bestowal of his youthful affections on Lieutenant Brandis — henceforward to be called "Coppy," for the sake of brevity — Wee Willie Winkie

was destined to behold strange things and far beyond his comprehension.

Coppy returned his liking with interest. Coppy had let him wear for five rapturous minutes his own big sword — just as tall as Wee Willie Winkie. Coppy had promised him a terrier puppy; and Coppy had permitted him to witness the miraculous operation of shaving. Nay, more — Coppy had said that even he, Wee Willie Winkie, would rise in time to the ownership of a box of shiny knives, a silver soap-box, and a silver-handled "sputter-brush," as Wee Willie Winkie called it. Decidedly, there was no one except his father, who could give or take away good-conduct badges at pleasure, half so wise, strong, and valiant as Coppy with the Afghan and Egyptian medals on his breast. Why, then, should Coppy be guilty of the unmanly weakness of kissing — vehemently kissing — a "big girl," Miss Allardyce, to wit? In the course of a morning ride, Wee Willie Winkie had seen Coppy so doing, and, like the gentleman he was, had promptly wheeled round and cantered back to his groom, lest the groom should also see.

Under ordinary circumstances he would have spoken to his father, but he felt instinctively that this was a matter on which Coppy ought first to be consulted.

"Coppy," shouted Wee Willie Winkie, reining up outside that subaltern's bungalow early one morning, "I want to see you, Coppy!"

"Come in, young 'un," returned Coppy, who was at early breakfast in the midst of his dogs. "What mischief have you been getting into now?"

Wee Willie Winkie had done nothing notoriously bad for three days, and so stood on a pinnacle of virtue.

"I've been doing nothing bad," said he, curling himself into a long chair with a studious affectation of the colonel's languor after a hot parade. He buried his freckled nose in a tea-cup and, with eyes staring roundly over the rim, asked: "I say, Coppy, is it pwoper to kiss big girls?"

"By Jove! You're beginning early. Who do you want to kiss?"

"No one. My muvver's always kissing me if I don't stop her. If it isn't pwoper, how was you kissing Major Allardyce's big girl last morning, by ve canal?"

Coppy's brow wrinkled. He and Miss Allardyce had with great craft managed to keep their engagement secret for a fortnight. There were urgent and imperative reasons why Major Allardyce should not know how matters stood for at least another month, and this small marplot had discovered a great deal too much.

"I saw you," said Wee Willie Winkie, calmly. "But ve groom didn't see. I said, '*Hut jao.*'"

"Oh, you had that much sense, you young rip," groaned poor Coppy, half amused and half angry. "And how many people may you have told about it?"

"Only me myself. You didn't tell when I twied to wide ve buffalo ven my pony was lame; and I fought you wouldn't like."

"Winkie," said Coppy, enthusiastically, shaking the small hand, "you're the best of good fellows. Look here, you can't understand all these things. One of these days — hang it, how can I make you see it! — I'm going to marry Miss Allardyce, and then she'll be Mrs. Coppy, as you say. If your young mind is so scandalized at the idea of kissing big girls, go and tell your father."

"What will happen?" said Wee Willie Winkie, who firmly believed that his father was omnipotent.

"I shall get into trouble," said Coppy, playing his trump card with an appealing look at the holder of the ace.

"Ven I won't," said Wee Willie Winkie, briefly. "But my faver says it's un-man-ly to be always kissing, and I didn't fink *you'd* do vat, Coppy."

"I'm not always kissing, old chap. It's only now and then, and when you're bigger you'll do it, too. Your father meant it's not good for little boys."

"Ah!" said Wee Willie Winkie, now fully enlightened. "It's like ve sputter-brush?"

"Exactly," said Coppy, gravely.

"But I don't fink I'll ever want to kiss big girls, nor no one, 'cept my muvver. And I *must* vat, you know."

There was a long pause, broken by Wee Willie Winkie.

"Are you fond of vis big girl, Coppy?"

"Awfully!" said Coppy.

"Fonder van you are of Bell or ve Butcha — or me?"

"It's in a different way," said Coppy. "You see, one of these days Miss Allardyce will belong to me, but you'll grow up and command the regiment and — all sorts of things. It's quite different, you see."

"Very well," said Wee Willie Winkie, rising. "If you're fond of ve big girl, I won't tell any one. I must go now."

Coppy rose and escorted his small guest to the door, adding: "You're the best of little fellows, Winkie. I tell you what. In thirty days from now you can tell if you like — tell any one you like."

Thus the secret of the Brandis-Allardyce engagement

was dependent on a little child's word. Coppy, who knew Wee Willie Winkie's idea of truth, was at ease, for he felt that he would not break promises. Wee Willie Winkie betrayed a special and unusual interest in Miss Allardyce, and, slowly revolving round that embarrassed young lady, was used to regard her gravely with unwinking eye. He was trying to discover why Coppy should have kissed her. She was not half so nice as his own mother. On the other hand, she was Coppy's property, and would in time belong to him. Therefore it behooved him to treat her with as much respect as Coppy's big sword or shiny pistol.

The idea that he shared a great secret in common with Coppy kept Wee Willie Winkie unusually virtuous for three weeks. Then the Old Adam broke out, and he made what he called a "camp fire" at the bottom of the garden. How could he have foreseen that the flying sparks would have lighted the colonel's little hayrick and consumed a week's store for the horses? Sudden and swift was the punishment — deprivation of the good-conduct badge and, most sorrowful of all, two days' confinement to barracks — the house and veranda — coupled with the withdrawal of the light of his father's countenance.

He took the sentence like the man he strove to be, drew himself up with a quivering under-lip, saluted, and, once clear of the room, ran to weep bitterly in his nursery — called by him "my quarters." Coppy came in the afternoon and attempted to console the culprit.

"I'm under awwest," said Wee Willie Winkie, mournfully, "and I didn't ought to speak to you."

Very early the next morning he climbed on to the roof of the house — that was not forbidden — and beheld Miss Allardyce going for a ride.

"Where are you going?" cried Wee Willie Winkie.

"Across the river," she answered, and trotted forward.

Now the cantonment in which the 195th lay was bounded on the north by a river — dry in the winter. From his earliest years, Wee Willie Winkie had been forbidden to go across the river, and had noted that even Coppy — the almost almighty Coppy — had never set foot beyond it. Wee Willie Winkie had once been read to, out of a big blue book, the history of the princess and the goblins — a most wonderful tale of a land where the goblins were always warring with the children of men until they were defeated by one Curdie. Ever since that date it seemed to him that the bare black and purple hills across the river were inhabited by goblins, and, in truth, every one had said that there lived the bad men. Even in his own house the lower halves of the windows were covered with green paper on account of the bad men who might, if allowed clear view, fire into peaceful drawing-rooms and comfortable bedrooms. Certainly, beyond the river, which was the end of all the earth, lived the bad men. And here was Major Allardyce's big girl, Coppy's property, preparing to venture into their borders! What would Coppy say if anything happened to her? If the goblins ran off with her as they did with Curdie's princess? She must at all hazards be turned back.

The house was still. Wee Willie Winkie reflected for a moment on the very terrible wrath of his father; and then — broke his arrest! It was a crime unspeakable. The low sun threw his shadow, very large and very black, on the trim garden-paths, as he went down to the stables and ordered his pony. It seemed to him in the hush of the dawn that all the big world had been bidden to stand still

and look at Wee Willie Winkie guilty of mutiny. The drowsy groom handed him his mount, and, since the one great sin made all others insignificant, Wee Willie Winkie said that he was going to ride over to Coppy Sahib, and went out at a foot-pace, stepping on the soft mould of the flower-borders.

The devastating track of the pony's feet was the last misdeed that cut him off from all sympathy of humanity. He turned into the road, leaned forward, and rode as fast as the pony could put foot to the ground in the direction of the river.

But the liveliest of twelve-two ponies can do little against the long canter of a waler. Miss Allardyce was far ahead, had passed through the crops, beyond the police-post, when all the guards were asleep, and her mount was scattering the pebbles of the river-bed as Wee Willie Winkie left the cantonment and British India behind him. Bowed forward and still flogging, Wee Willie Winkie shot into Afghan territory, and could just see Miss Allardyce, a black speck, flickering across the stony plain. The reason of her wandering was simple enough. Coppy, in a tone of too hastily assumed authority, had told her over night that she must not ride out by the river. And she had gone to prove her own spirit and teach Coppy a lesson.

Almost at the foot of the inhospitable hills, Wee Willie Winkie saw the waler blunder and come down heavily. Miss Allardyce struggled clear, but her ankle had been severely twisted, and she could not stand. Having thus demonstrated her spirit, she wept copiously, and was surprised by the apparition of a white, wide-eyed child in khaki, on a nearly spent pony.

"Are you badly, badly hurted?" shouted Wee Willie

Winkie, as soon as he was within range. "You didn't ought to be here."

"I don't know," said Miss Allardyce, ruefully, ignoring the reproof. "Good gracious, child, what are *you* doing here?"

"You said you was going acwoss ve wiver," panted Wee Willie Winkie, throwing himself off his pony. "And nobody—not even Coppy—must go acwoss ve wiver, and I came after you ever so hard, but you wouldn't stop, and now you've hurted yourself, and Coppy will be angwy wiv me, and — I've bwoken my awwest! I've bwoken my awwest!"

The future colonel of the 195th sat down and sobbed. In spite of the pain in her ankle the girl was moved.

"Have you ridden all the way from cantonments, little man? What for?"

"You belonged to Coppy. Coppy told me so!" wailed Wee Willie Winkie, disconsolately. "I saw him kissing you, and he said he was fonder of you van Bell or ve Butcha or me. And so I came. You must get up and come back. You didn't ought to be here. Vis is a bad place, and I've bwoken my awwest."

"I can't move, Winkie," said Miss Allardyce, with a groan. "I've hurt my foot. What shall I do?"

She showed a readiness to weep afresh, which steadied Wee Willie Winkie, who had been brought up to believe that tears were the depth of unmanliness. Still, when one is as great a sinner as Wee Willie Winkie, even a man may be permitted to break down.

"Winkie," said Miss Allardyce, "when you've rested a little, ride back and tell them to send out something to carry me back in. It hurts fearfully."

The child sat still for a little time and Miss Allardyce closed her eyes; the pain was nearly making her faint. She was roused by Wee Willie Winkie tying up the reins on his pony's neck and setting it free with a vicious cut of his whip that made it whicker. The little animal headed toward the cantonments.

"Oh, Winkie! What are you doing?"

"Hush!" said Wee Willie Winkie. "Vere's a man comin — one of ve bad men. I must stay wiv you. My faver says a man must *always* look after a girl. Jack will go home, and ven vey'l come and look for us. Vat's why I let him go."

Not one man but two or three had appeared from behind the rocks of the hills, and the heart of Wee Willie Winkie sunk within him, for just in this manner were the goblins wont to steal out and vex Curdie's soul. Thus had they played in Curdie's garden, he had seen the picture, and thus had they frightened the princess's nurse. He heard them talking to each other, and recognized with joy the bastard Pushto, that he had picked up from one of his father's grooms lately dismissed. People who spoke that tongue could not be the bad men. They were only natives after all.

They came up to the boulders on which Miss Allardyce's horse had blundered.

Then rose from the rock Wee Willie Winkie, child of the dominant race, aged six and three-quarters, and said, briefly and emphatically, "*Jao!*" The pony had crossed the river-bed.

The men laughed, and laughter from the natives was the one thing Wee Willie Winkie could not tolerate. He asked them what they wanted and why they did not depart.

Other men, with most evil faces and crooked-stocked guns, crept out of the shadows of the hills, till soon Wee Willie Winkie was face to face with an audience some twenty strong. Miss Allardyce screamed.

"Who are you?" said one of the men.

"I am the Colonel Sahib's son, and my order is that you go at once. You black men are frightening the Miss Sahib. One of you must run into cantonments and take the news that the Miss Sahib has hurt herself, and that the colonel's son is here with her."

"Put our feet into the trap?" was the laughing reply. "Hear this boy's speech!"

"Say that I sent you — I, the colonel's son. They will give you money."

"What is the use of this talk? Take up the child and the girl, and we can at least ask for the ransom. Ours are the villages on the heights," said a voice in the background.

These *were* the bad men — worse than the goblins — and it needed all Wee Willie Winkie's training to prevent him from bursting into tears. But he felt that to cry before a native, excepting only his mother's *ayah*, would be an infamy greater than any mutiny. Moreover, he, as future colonel of the 195th, had that grim regiment at his back.

"Are you going to carry us away?" said Wee Willie Winkie, very blanched and uncomfortable.

"Yes, my little *Sahib Bahadur*," said the tallest of the men, "and eat you afterward."

"That is child's talk," said Wee Willie Winkie. "Men do not eat men."

A yell of laughter interrupted him, but he went on,

firmly: "And if you do carry us away, I tell you that all my regiment will come up in a day and kill you all, without leaving one. Who will take my message to the Colonel Sahib?"

Speech in any vernacular — and Wee Willie Winkie had a colloquial acquaintance with three — was easy to the boy who could not yet manage his "r's" and "th's" aright.

Another man joined the conference, crying: "Oh, foolish men! What this babe says is true. He is the heart's heart of those white troops. For the sake of peace let them go both, for if he be taken, the regiment will break loose and gut the valley. *Our* villages are in the valley, and we shall not escape. That regiment are devils. They broke Khoda Yar's breast-bone with kicks when he tried to take the rifles; and if we touch this child, they will fire and rape and plunder for a month, till nothing remains. Better to send a man back to take the message and get a reward. I say that this child is their god, and that they will spare none of us, nor our women, if we harm him."

It was Din Mahommed, the dismissed groom of the colonel, who made the diversion, and an angry and heated discussion followed. Wee Willie Winkie, standing over Miss Allardyce, waited the upshot. Surely his "wegiment," his own "wegiment," would not desert him if they knew of his extremity.

* * * * * * *

The riderless pony brought the news to the 195th, though there had been consternation in the colonel's household for an hour before. The little beast came in through the parade-ground in front of the main barracks,

where the men were settling down to play spoil-five till the afternoon. Devlin, the color-sergeant of E Company, glanced at the empty saddle and tumbled through the barrack-rooms, kicking up each room corporal as he passed. "Up, ye beggars! There's something happened to the colonel's son," he shouted.

"He couldn't fall off! S'elp me, 'e *couldn't* fall off," blubbered a drummer-boy. "Go an' hunt acrost the river. He's over there if he's anywhere, an' maybe those Pathans have got 'im. For the love o' Gawd don't look for 'im in the nullahs! Let's go over the river."

"There's sense in Mott yet," said Devlin. "E Company, double out to the river — sharp!"

So E Company, in its shirt-sleeves mainly, doubled for the dear life, and in the rear toiled the perspiring sergeant, adjuring it to double yet faster. The cantonment was alive with the men of the 195th hunting for Wee Willie Winkie, and the colonel finally overtook E Company, far too exhausted to swear, struggling in the pebbles of the river-bed.

Up the hill under which Wee Willie Winkie's bad men were discussing the wisdom of carrying off the child and the girl, a lookout fired two shots.

"What have I said?" shouted Din Mahommed. "There is the warning! The *pulton* are out already and are coming across the plain! Get away! Let us not be seen with the boy!"

The men waited for an instant, and then, as another shot was fired, withdrew into the hills, silently as they had appeared.

"The wegiment is coming," said Wee Willie Winkie,

confidently to Miss Allardyce, "and it's all wight. Don't cwy!"

He needed the advice himself, for ten minutes later, when his father came up, he was weeping bitterly with his head in Miss Allardyce's lap.

And the men of the 195th carried him home with shouts and rejoicings; and Coppy, who had ridden a horse into a lather, met him, and, to his intense disgust, kissed him openly in the presence of the men.

But there was balm for his dignity. His father assured him that not only would the breaking of arrest be condoned, but that the good-conduct badge would be restored as soon as his mother could sew it on his blouse-sleeve. Miss Allardyce had told the colonel a story that made him proud of his son.

"She belonged to you, Coppy," said Wee Willie Winkie, indicating Miss Allardyce with a grimy forefinger. "I *knew* she didn't ought to go acwoss ve wiver, and I knew ve wegiment would come to me if I sent Jack home."

"You're a hero, Winkie," said Coppy, "a *pukka* hero!"

"I don't know what vat means," said Wee Willie Winkie, "but you mustn't call me Winkie any no more. I'm Percival Will'am Will'ams."

And in this manner did Wee Willie Winkie enter into his manhood.

MISS GUNTON OF POUGHKEEPSIE[1]

By Henry James

"It's astonishing what you take for granted," Lady Champer had exclaimed to her young friend at an early stage; and this might have served as a sign that even then the little plot had begun to thicken. The reflection was uttered at the time the outlook of the charming American girl in whom she found herself so interested was still much in the rough. They had often met, with pleasure to each, during a winter spent in Rome; and Lily had come to her in London towards the end of May with further news of a situation the dawn of which, in March and April, by the Tiber, the Arno, and the Seine, had considerably engaged her attention. The Prince had followed Miss Gunton to Florence and then with almost equal promptitude to Paris, where it was both clear and comical for Lady Champer that the rigor of his uncertainty as to parental commands and remittances now detained him. This shrewd woman promised herself not a little amusement from her view of the possibilities of the case. Lily was on the whole showing a wonder; therefore the drama would lose nothing from her character, her temper, her tone. She was waiting — this was the truth she had imparted to her clever protec-

[1] In "The Soft Side." The Macmillan Company. 1900.

tress — to see if her Roman captive would find himself drawn to London. Should he really turn up there she would the next thing start for America, putting him to the test of that wider range and declining to place her confidence till he should have arrived in New York at her heels. If he remained in Paris or returned to Rome she would stay in London and, as she phrased it, have a good time by herself. Did he expect her to go back to Paris for him? Why not in that case just as well go back to Rome at once? The first thing for her, Lily intimated to her London adviser, was to show what, in her position, *she* expected.

Her position meanwhile was one that Lady Champer, try as she would, had as yet succeeded neither in understanding nor in resigning herself not to understand. It was that of being extraordinarily pretty, amazingly free, and perplexingly good, and of presenting these advantages in a positively golden light. How was one to estimate a girl whose nearest approach to a drawback — that is to an encumbrance — appeared to be a grandfather carrying on a business in an American city her ladyship had never otherwise heard of, with whom communication was all by cable and on the subject of "drawing"? Expression was on the old man's part, moreover, as concise as it was expensive, consisting as it inveterately did of but the single word "Draw." Lily drew, on every occasion in life, and it at least could not be said of the pair — when the "family idea," as embodied in America, was exposed to criticism — that they were not in touch. Mr. Gunton had given her further Mrs. Brine, to come out with her, and with this provision and the perpetual pecuniary he plainly figured — to Lily's own mind — as solicitous to the point of anxiety. Mrs. Brine's scheme of relations seemed in truth to be sim-

ler still. There was a transatlantic "Mr. Brine," of whom she often spoke — and never in any other way; but he wrote for newspapers; she prowled in catacombs, visiting more than once even those of Paris; she haunted hotels; she picked up compatriots; she spoke above all a language that often baffled comprehension. She mattered, however, but little; she was mainly so occupied in having what Lily had likewise independently glanced at — a good time by herself. It was difficult enough indeed to Lady Champer to see the wonderful girl reduced to that, yet she was a little person who kept one somehow in presence of the incalculable. Old measures and familiar rules were of no use at all with her — she had so broken the molds and so mixed the marks. What was confounding was her disparities — the juxtaposition in her of beautiful un-flushed heights and deep dark holes. She had none of the things that the other things implied. She dangled in the air in a manner that made one dizzy; though one took comfort, at the worst, in feeling that one was there to catch her if she fell. Falling, at the same time, appeared scarce one of her properties, and it was positive for Lady Champer at moments that if one held out one's arms one might be, after all, much more likely to be pulled up. That was really a part of the excitement of the acquaintance.

"Well," said this friend and critic on one of the first of the London days, "say he does, on your return to your own country, go after you: how do you read, on that occurrence, the course of events?"

"Why, if he comes after me I'll have him."

"And do you think it is so easy to 'have' him?"

Lily appeared, lovely and candid, — and it was the air

and a way she often had, — to wonder what she thought. "I don't know that I think it any easier than he seems to think it to have *me*. I know moreover that, though he wants awfully to see the country, he wouldn't just now come to America unless to marry me; and if I take him at all," she pursued, "I want first to be able to show him to the girls."

"Why 'first'?" Lady Champer asked. "Wouldn't it do as well last?"

"Oh, I should want them to see me in Rome, too," said Lily. "But, dear me, I'm afraid I want a good many things! What I most want of course is that he should show me unmistakably what *he* wants. Unless he wants me more than anything else in the world, I don't want him. Besides, I hope he doesn't think I'm going to be married anywhere but in my own place."

"I see," said Lady Champer. "It's for your wedding you want the girls. And it's for the girls you want the Prince."

"Well, we're all bound by that promise. And of course *you'll* come!"

"Ah, my dear child — !" Lady Champer gasped.

"You can come with the old Princess. You'll be just the right company for her."

The elder friend considered afresh, with depth, the younger's beauty and serenity. "You *are*, love, beyond everything!"

The beauty and serenity took on for a moment a graver cast. "Why do you so often say that to me?"

"Because you so often make it the only thing to say. But you'll some day find out why," Lady Champer added with an intention of encouragement.

Lily Gunton, however, was a young person to whom encouragement looked queer; she had grown up without need f it, and it seemed indeed scarce required in her situation. 'Do you mean you believe his mother won't come?"

"Over mountains and seas to see you married? — and o be seen also of the girls? If she does, *I* will. But we ad perhaps better," Lady Champer wound up, "not count ur chickens before they're hatched." To which, with one f the easy returns of gaiety that were irresistible in her, Lily made answer that neither of the ladies in question truck her quite as chickens.

The Prince at all events presented himself in London vith a promptitude that contributed to make the warning ratuitous. Nothing could have exceeded, by this time, Lady Champer's appreciation of her young friend, whose nerits "town" at the beginning of June threw into renewed relief; but she had the imagination of greatness and, hough she believed she tactfully kept it to herself, she hought what the young man had thus done a great deal or a Roman prince to do. Take him as he was, with the ircumstances — and they were certainly peculiar, and he vas charming — it was a far cry for him from Piazza Conna to Clarges Street. If Lady Champer had the magination of greatness, which the Prince in all sorts of vays gratified, Miss Gunton of Poughkeepsie — it was ain to pretend the contrary — was not great in any partic-lar save one. She was great when she "drew." It vas true that at the beginning of June she did draw with nprecedented energy and in a manner that, though Mrs. Brine's remarkable nerve apparently could stand it, airly made a poor baronet's widow, little as it was her usiness, hold her breath. It was none of her business at

all, yet she talked of it even with the Prince himself — t whom it was indeed a favourite subject and whose great ness, oddly enough, never appeared to shrink in the effec it produced upon him. The line they took together wa that of wondering if the scale of Lily's drafts made really most for the presumption that the capital at her dis posal was rapidly dwindling, or for that of its being practi cally infinite. "Many a fellow," the young man smiled "would marry her to pull her up." He was in any case o the opinion that it was an occasion for deciding — one way or the other — quickly. Well, he did decide — so quickly that, within the week, Lily communicated to her friend that he had offered her his hand, his heart, his fortune, and all his titles, grandeurs, and appurtenances She had given him his answer, and he was in bliss; though nothing, as yet, was settled but that.

Tall, fair, active, educated, amiable, simple, carrying so naturally his great name and pronouncing so kindly Lily's small one, the happy youth, if he was one of the most ancient of princes, was one of the most modern of Romans. This second character it was his special aim and pride to cultivate. He would have been pained at feeling himself an hour behind his age; and he had a way — both touching and amusing to some observers — of constantly comparing his watch with the dial of the day's news. It was in fact easy to see that in deciding to ally himself with a young alien of vague origin, whose striking beauty was reinforced only by her presumptive money, he had even put forward a little the fine hands of his time piece. No one else, however, — not even Lady Champer, and least of all Lily herself, — had quite taken the measure, in this connection, of his merit. The quick decision he had

spoken of was really a flying leap. He desired incontestably to rescue Miss Gunton's remainder; but to rescue it he had to take it for granted, and taking it for granted was nothing less than — at whatever angle considered — a risk. He never, naturally, used the word to her, but he distinctly faced a peril. The sense of what he had staked on a vague return gave him, at the height of the London season, bad nights, or rather bad mornings — for he danced with his intended, as a usual thing, conspicuously, till dawn — besides obliging him to take, in the form of long explanatory, argumentative, and persuasive letters to his mother and sisters, his uncles, aunts, cousins, and preferred confidants, large measures of justification at home. The family sense was strong in his huge old house, just as the family array was numerous; he was dutifully conscious of the trust reposed in him, and moved from morning till night, he perfectly knew as the observed of a phalanx of observers; whereby he the more admired himself for his passion, precipitation, and courage. He had only a probability to go upon, but he was — and by the romantic tradition of his race — so in love that he should surely not be taken in.

His private agitation of course deepened when, to do honour to her engagement and as if she would have been ashamed to do less, Lily "drew" again almost gloriously; but he managed to smile beautifully on her asking him if he didn't want her to be splendid, and at his worst hours he went no further than to wish that he might be married on the morrow. Unless it were the next day, or at most the next month, it really at moments seemed best that it should never be at all. On the most favourable view — with the solidity of the residuum fully assumed — there were still

minor questions and dangers. A vast America, arching over his nuptials, bristling with the expectant bridesmaids and underlaying their feet with expensive flowers, stared him in the face and prompted him to the reflection that if she dipped so deep into the mere remote overflow her dive into the fount itself would verily be a header. If she drew at such a rate in London how wouldn't she draw at Poughkeepsie? he asked himself, and practically asked Lady Champer; yet bore the strain of the question, without an answer, so nobly that when, with small delay, Poughkeepsie seemed simply to heave with reassurances, he regarded the ground as firm and his tact as rewarded. "And now at last, dearest," he said, "since everything's so satisfactory, you *will* write?" He put it appealingly, endearingly, yet as if he could scarce doubt.

"Write, love? Why," she replied, "I've done nothing *but* write! I've written ninety letters."

"But not to Mamma," he smiled.

"Mamma?" — she stared. "My dear boy, I've not at this time of the day to remind you that I've the misfortune to have no mother. I lost mamma, you know, as you lost your father, in childhood. You may be sure," said Lily Gunton, "that I wouldn't otherwise have waited for you to prompt me."

There came into his face a kind of amiable convulsion. "Of course, darling, I remember — your beautiful mother (she *must* have been beautiful!) whom I should have been so glad to know. I was thinking of *my* mamma — who'll be so delighted to hear from you." The Prince spoke English in perfection — had lived in it from the cradle and appeared, particularly when alluding to his home and family, to matters familiar and of fact, or to those of

ress and sport, of general recreation, to draw such a com-
ort from it as made the girl think of him as scarce more
foreigner than a pleasant, auburn, slightly awkward,
ightly slangy, and extremely well-tailored young Briton
ould have been. He sounded "mamma" like a rosy
English schoolboy; yet just then, for the first time, the
hings with which he was connected struck her as in a
anner strange and far-off. Everything in him, none the
ess — face and voice and tact, above all his deep desire —
aboured to bring them near and make them natural.
his was intensely the case as he went on; "Such a little
etter as you *might* send would really be awfully jolly."

"My dear child," Lily replied on quick reflection, "I'll
rite to her with joy the minute I hear from her. Won't
he write to *me?*"

The Prince just visibly flushed. "In a moment if you'll
nly —"

"Write to her first?"

"Just pay her a little — no matter how little — your
espects."

His attenuation of the degree showed perhaps a sense of
weakness of position; yet it was no perception of this
hat made the girl immediately say: "Oh, *caro*, I don't
hink I can begin. If you feel that *she* won't — as you
vidently do — is it because you've asked her and she has
efused?" The next moment, "I see you *have!*" she
xclaimed. His rejoinder to this was to catch her in his
rms, to press his cheek to hers, to murmur a flood of
ender words in which contradiction, confession, supplica-
ion, and remonstrance were oddly confounded; but after
he had sufficiently disengaged her to allow her to speak
gain, his effusion was checked by what came. "Do you

really mean you can't induce her?" It renewed itse
on the first return of ease; or it, more correctly perhap
in order to renew itself, took this return — a trifle to
soon — for granted. Singular, for the hour, was the quick
ness with which ease could leave them — so blissfull
at one as they were; and, to be brief, it had not come bac
even when Lily spoke of the matter to Lady Champer.
is true that she waited but little to do so. She the
went straight to the point. "What would you do if hi
mother doesn't write?"

"The old Princess — to *you?*" Her ladyship had no
had time to mount guard in advance over the tone of this
which was doubtless (as she instantly, for that matter
herself became aware) a little too much that of "Have yo
really expected she would?" What Lily had expecte
found itself therefore not unassisted to come out — an
came out indeed to such a tune that with all kindness, bu
with a melancholy deeper than any she had ever yet in th
general connection used, Lady Champer was moved t
remark that the situation might have been found mor
possible had a little more historic sense been brought to it
"You're the dearest thing in the world, and I can't imagin
a girl's carrying herself in any way, in a difficult position
better than you do; only I'm bound to say I think yo
ought to remember that you're entering a very grea
house, of tremendous antiquity, fairly groaning under th
weight of ancient honours, the heads of which — through
the tradition of the great part they've played in the world
— are accustomed to a great deal of deference. The old
Princess, my dear, you see" — her ladyship gathered
confidence a little as she went — "is a most prodigiou
personage."

"Why, Lady Champer, of course she is, and that's just what I like her for!" said Lily Gunton.

"She has never in her whole life made an advance, any more than any one has ever dreamed of expecting it of her. It's a pity that while you were there you didn't see her, for I think it would have helped you to understand. However, as you did see his sisters, the two Duchesses and dear little Donna Claudia, you know how charming they all *can* be. They only want to be nice, I know, and I dare say that on the smallest opportunity you'll hear from the Duchesses."

The plural had a sound of splendour, but Lily quite kept her head. "What do you call an opportunity? Am I not giving them, by accepting their son and brother, the best — and in fact the only — opportunity they could desire?"

"I like the way, darling," Lady Champer smiled, "you talk about 'accepting'!"

Lily thought of this — she thought of everything. "Well, say it would have been a better one still for them if I had refused him."

Her friend caught her up. "But you haven't."

"Then they must make the most of the occasion as it is." Lily was very sweet, but very lucid. "The Duchesses may write or not, as they like; but I'm afraid the Princess simply *must*." She hesitated, but after a moment went on: "He oughtn't to be willing moreover that I shouldn't expect to be welcomed."

"He isn't!" Lady Champer blurted out.

Lily jumped at it. "Then he has told you? It's her attitude?"

She had spoken without passion, but her friend was

scarce the less frightened. "My poor child, what can I do?"

Lily saw perfectly. "He can make her."

Lady Champer turned it over, but her fears were wh was clearest. "And if he doesn't?"

"If he 'doesn't'?" The girl ambiguously echoed it.

"I mean if he can't."

Well, Lily, more cheerfully, declined, for the hour, consider this. He would certainly do for her what w right; so that after all, though she had herself put t question, she disclaimed the idea that an answer w urgent. There was time, she conveyed — which Lad Champer only desired to believe; a faith moreover som what shaken in the latter when the Prince entered her roo the next day with the information that there was none — none at least to leave everything in the air. Lad Champer had not yet made up her mind as to which these young persons she liked most to draw into con dence, nor as to whether she most inclined to take t Roman side with the American or the American side wi the Roman. But now in truth she was settled; she ga proof of it in the increased lucidity with which she spo for Lily.

"Wouldn't the Princess depart — a — from her usu attitude for such a great occasion?"

The difficulty was a little that the young man so w understood his mother. "The devil of it is, you see, th it's for Lily herself, so much more, she thinks the occasi great."

Lady Champer mused. "If you hadn't her consent could understand it. But from the moment she thin the girl good enough for you to marry —"

'Ah, she doesn't!" the Prince gloomily interposed. Iowever," he explained, "she accepts her because ere are reasons — my own feeling, now so my very , don't you see? But it isn't quite open arms. All e same, as I tell Lily, the arms *would* open."

"If she'd make the first step? Hum!" said Lady amper, not without the note of grimness. "She'll obstinate."

The young man, with a melancholy eye, quite coincided. he'll be obstinate."

"So that I strongly recommend you to manage it," his end went on after a pause. "It strikes me that if the incess can't do it for Lily she might at least do it for you. y girl you marry becomes thereby somebody."

"Of course — doesn't she? She certainly ought to do for *me*. I'm after all the head of the house."

"Well, then, make her!" said Lady Champer a little patiently.

"I will. Mamma adores me, and I adore *her*."

"And you adore Lily, and Lily adores you — therefore erybody adores everybody, especially as I adore you th. With so much adoration all round, therefore, ings ought to march."

"They shall!" the young man declared with spirit. "I ore you, too — you don't mention that; for you help e immensely. But what do you suppose she'll do if she esn't?"

The agitation already visible in him ministered a little vagueness; but his friend after an instant disembroiled "What do I suppose Lily will do if your mother mains stiff?" Lady Champer faltered, but she let him ve it. "She'll break."

His wondering eyes became strange. "Just for that?"

"You may certainly say it isn't much — when peop love as you do."

"Ah, I'm afraid then Lily doesn't!" — and he turn away in his trouble.

She watched him while he moved, not speaking for minute. "My dear young man, are you afraid of yo mamma?"

He faced short about again. "I'm afraid of this — th if she does do it she won't forgive her. She *will* do it yes. But Lily will be for her, in consequence, ever afte the person who has made her submit herself. She'll ha her for that — and then she'll hate me for being co cerned in it." The Prince presented it all with clearness almost with charm. "What do you say to that?"

His friend had to think. "Well, only, I fear, that belong, Lily and I, to a race unaccustomed to counti with such passions. Let her hate!" she, however, a tri inconsistently wound up.

"But I love her so!"

"Which?" Lady Champer asked it almost u graciously; in such a tone at any rate that, seated on t sofa with his elbows on his knees, his much-ringed han nervously locked together and his eyes of distress wi open, he met her with visible surprise. What she met *h* with is perhaps best noted by the fact that after a minu of it his hands covered his bent face and she became awa she had drawn tears. This produced such regret in h that before they parted she did what she could to attenua and explain — making a great point, at all events, of h rule, with Lily, of putting only his own side of the ca "I insist awfully, you know, on your greatness!"

He jumped up, wincing. "Oh, that's horrid."

"I don't know. Whose fault is it, then, at any rate, if rying to help you may have that side?" This was a ques- ion that, with the tangle he had already to unwind, only dded a twist; yet she went on as if positively to add s nother. "Why on earth don't you, all of you, leave them lone?"

"Leave them —?"

"All your Americans."

"Don't you like them then — the women?"

She hesitated. "No. Yes. They're an interest. But hey're a nuisance. It's a question, very certainly, if hey're worth the trouble they give."

This at least it seemed he could take in. "You mean hat one should be quite sure first what they *are* worth?"

He made her laugh now. "It would appear that you ever *can* be. But also really that you can't keep your ands off."

He fixed the social scene an instant with his heavy eye. 'Yes. Doesn't it?"

"However," she pursued as if he again a little irritated er, "Lily's position is quite simple."

"Quite. She just loves me."

"I mean simple for herself. She really makes no dif- ferences. It's only we — you and I — who make them ll."

The Prince wondered. "But she tells me she delights in us; has, that is, such a sense of what we are supposed to 'represent.'"

"Oh, she *thinks* she has. Americans think they have all sorts of things; but they haven't. That's just *it*" — Lady Champer was philosophic. "Nothing but their

Americanism. If you marry anything, you marry that and if your mother accepts anything that's what she a cepts." Then, though the young man followed th demonstration with an apprehension almost pathetic, sh gave him without mercy the whole of it. "Lily's rigidl logical. A girl — as *she* knows girls — is 'welcomed on her engagement before anything else can happen, by th family of her young man; and the motherless girl, alon in the world, more punctually than any other. H mother — if she's a 'lady' — takes it upon herself. The the girl goes and stays with them. But she does nothin before. *Tirez-vous de là.*"

The young man sought on the spot to obey this las injunction, and his effort presently produced a flash "Oh, if she'll come and *stay* with us" — all would, easily be well! The flash went out, however, when Lad Champer returned: "Then let the Princess invite her."

Lily a fortnight later simply said to her, from on hour to the other, "I'm going home," and took her breat away by sailing on the morrow with the Bransbys. Th tense cord had somehow snapped; the proof was in the fac that the Prince, dashing off to his good friend at thi crisis an obscure, an ambiguous note, started the sam night for Rome. Lady Champer, for the time, sat i darkness, but during the summer many things occurred and one day in the autumn, quite unheralded and with th signs of some of them in his face, the Prince appeared agai before her. He was not long in telling her his story, whic was simply that he had come to her, all the way from Rom for news of Lily and to talk of Lily. She was prepared, a it happened, to meet his impatience; yet her preparatio was but little older than his arrival and was deficien

oreover in an important particular. She was not pre-ared to knock him down, and she made him talk to gain me. She had, however, to understand but a primary uestion: "She never wrote, then?"

"Mamma? Oh yes — when she at last got frightened Miss Gunton's having become so silent. She wrote in ugust; but Lily's own decisive letter — letter to me I ean — crossed with it. It was too late — that put an id."

"A *real* end?"

Everything in the young man showed how real. "On ie ground of her being willing no longer to keep up, by ie stand she had taken, such a relation between mamma id *me*. But her rupture," he wailed, "keeps it up more an anything else."

"And is it very bad?"

"Awful, I assure you. I've become for my mother a erson who has made her make, all for nothing, an unprece-ented advance, a humble submission; and she's so dis-usted, all round, that it's no longer the same old charm-g thing for us to be together. It makes it worse for her at I'm still madly in love."

"Well," said Lady Champer after a moment, "if you're ill madly in love I can only be sorry for you."

"You can *do* nothing for me? — don't advise me to go ver?"

She had to take a long pause. "You don't at all know en what has happened? — that old Mr. Gunton has ed and left her everything?"

All his vacancy and curiosity came out in a wild echo. "'Everything'?"

"She writes me that it's a great deal of money."

"You've just heard from her, then?"

"This morning. I seem to make out," said La Champer, "an extraordinary number of dollars."

"Oh, I was sure it was!" the young man moaned.

"And she's engaged," his friend went on, "to M Bransby."

He bounded, rising before her. "Mr. Bransby?"

"'Adam P.' — the gentleman with whose mother a sisters she went home. *They*, she writes, have beautiful welcomed her."

"*Dio mio!*" The Prince stared; he had flushed wi the blow, and the tears had come into his eyes. "And believed she loved me!"

"*I* didn't!" said Lady Champer with some curtness.

He gazed about; he almost rocked; and, unconscio of her words, he appealed, inarticulate and stricken. last, however, he found his voice. "What on earth th shall I do? I can less than ever go back to mamma!"

She got up for him, she thought for him, pushi a better chair into her circle. "Stay here with m and I'll ring for tea. Sit there nearer the fire — you' cold."

"Awfully!" he confessed as he sank. "And I believ she loved me!" he repeated as he stared at the fire.

"*I* didn't!" Lady Champer once more declared. Th time, visibly, he heard her, and she immediately met h wonder. "No — it was all the rest; your great histo position, the glamour of your name, and your past. Oth wise what she stood out for wouldn't be excusable. B she has the sense of such things, and *they* were what s loved." So, by the fire, his hostess explained it, wh he wondered the more.

"I thought that last summer you told me just the contrary."

It seemed to do her justice, to strike her. "Did I? Oh, well, how does one know? With Americans one is lost!"

THE STEAMER CHILD[1]

By Elsie Singmaster

Of the hundreds who heard with sick horror of her disappearance, only six or seven persons remembered her arrival. She had danced out over the high doorsill as the ship was leaving the smooth calm of the harbor for a roughening sea, and had stood for a moment looking about her, her square chin lifted, her straight brown hair flying, the collar of her blue sailor suit blowing about her ears, her skirts tossed almost to her shoulders, her thin little legs, in their black bloomers and stockings, bending back to meet the wind.

There were only a few persons in sight. Near at hand stood a group of old gentlemen telling of storms they had weathered; half way down the deck were a young man and a young woman, he lying back, his face white, she sitting on the arm of the next chair, laughing. For an instant the child hesitated, as if selecting her prey; then, without a sound to warn them of her coming, she dashed up to the group of elderly gentlemen, thrust her head between the knees of the least steady, and clasped his legs with her arms.

[1] In *McClure's Magazine*, August, 1910. Reprinted with the permission of McClure's and of the author.

"Play camel!" she commanded.

For an instant the old gentleman wavered as if about to fall; then one of his friends put out a steadying hand.

"What is your name, little girl?" he asked, in an effort to appear unruffled and kindly.

"Elizabeth Myers."

"Where are your father and mother?"

"Father's conducting a Tucker Tour. He has sixteen women to look after, and thirty-two bags, and they're fighting him already. And Mother's sick. Somebody'll have to play with me."

The old gentlemen placed their knees close together, and stood with their backs to the rail. The ship plunged more deeply, spray dashed into their faces, and they said, with wan smiles, that they would go below.

The sailors began to fasten the canvas above the rail. The floor suddenly became wet. The child bounced down the deck with sickening agility. The young man in the steamer chair looked desperately uncomfortable. Two hours before his heart had leaped with joy when he saw the young lady's name on the steamer list, but now he wished only that she would leave him alone.

For an instant Elizabeth eyed them with a knowing grin. Lovers, were they? She had known other lovers. She started forward to speak to them — then a more delightful possibility attracted her. She plunged toward the rail, and thrust her head far out between the horizontal bars. The ship lurched; there was a shriek, a swirl of skirts, and she found herself in the clutch of a firm hand.

"I only wanted to look over!" she shrieked. "Let me go! I'll tell my father."

The hand of the young lady administered a final shake, and she led Elizabeth to the door as a help on her journey.

"Go, by all means, and tell your father!

"There is always a child like that on a steamer," she said, as she came back. "They're a regular type. Why, Elwood!" She realized suddenly that she was speaking to the empty air. The young man had vanished. The shock of the child's danger had been the last straw. Without a glance at his companion, without thought of steamer rug or cushion, he had fled.

It was only a day before the sky cleared, the sea became smooth, and the long lines of steamer chairs were filled. Elizabeth's father proved to be a bustling little man, a school-teacher, with all the solicitude of a tour conductor on the early stages of his journey. His wife was tall and slender. She lay back in her chair, talking about Elizabeth, who, she said, was "made of quicksilver." She said also, that Elizabeth had never been punished — she had too delicate a nature; at which the ladies of the Tucker Tour looked meaningly into one another's eyes.

The old gentlemen walked up and down together. The man from Indiana or Idaho or Wisconsin had appeared stout, jeweled, prosperous, sure of himself, but not sure he declared proudly, whether Desdemona was a town or a doge; that, he said, he was going abroad to learn. The flirtatious lady halted the ship's doctor to ask whether he was sure there was no help for seasickness, and he suggested without pausing in his walk, a bench under an oak tree.

In their midst was Elizabeth. The man from Indiana, who was the soul of good nature, consented to play came

and raced up and down the deck until he panted. The ladies of the Tucker Tour declined even to answer her questions. When, on her way to her mother's chair, she scrambled over them, with a partly eaten orange in her hand, a look of hatred would come into their eyes.

The young man had reappeared, and had found the young lady, and together they had gone to the bow, with rugs and books. But they did not read. Elizabeth, watching them from behind a mass of machinery, thought them very dull. But Elizabeth, lacking excitement, was always able to create it. She danced out from behind the machinery.

"You kissed her," she declared shamelessly.

The young man caught her by the arm.

"I'll put her overboard if you say so, Helen," he said to the young lady.

The young lady flushed scarlet; then she put out her hand. Usually she had no difficulty in making friends with children. This one needed to be made friends with for the same reason that one is politic with an enemy. The young lady was crossing alone, in her own independent fashion. She had a perfectly natural desire to discover whether her rejection had seriously hurt this handsome suitor, and she did not wish to have to avoid him.

"Come here, little girl."

Elizabeth jerked from the young man's grasp.

"I'll tell everybody on you," she threatened.

"I will put you overboard next time," called the young man. He had succeeded in persuading himself that the young lady was kinder, that her eyes and her words occasionally showed a weariness of the independence and

loneliness which she said she preferred. He did not wish to be interrupted.

Elizabeth decided that sport here was over for the present. She would steal back after a while, when they were not expecting her. She would catch them yet. The bow was cold when one had no steamer rug, and Elizabeth was hungry. The steward, with his great tray of bouillon, was a tempting victim, and she could tease him to her heart's content. He would not dare to shake her. She smiled happily to herself, thinking of the long days before her, in which she should annoy him, and frighten the lovers, and make herself generally unpleasant to mankind.

It was only Elizabeth and her father and mother who did not distinguish one day from another by her escapades. It was the day before they reached San Miguel that she had almost started a panic by shouting fire; it was at San Miguel that she had almost upset the little boat in which they went ashore; it was at Gibraltar that the lighter was delayed fifteen minutes while her father hunted frantically for her. Even her mother was a little affected by this disappearance: she said she was glad that they were in the Mediterranean — it seemed safer for Elizabeth.

When finally they realized that she was gone, there were various reports about the last time that she had been seen. She had not come to luncheon with her father and mother; but, knowing that there was a place at the second table that she often appropriated, they had not looked for her. Her father had been made chairman of the "Sports" Committee, and he had been busy all morning persuading people to register for "egg races," "potato races," and

tugs of war; he had had no time to look after Elizabeth. Other things had occupied him: there were two women in the party who had hourly discussions about which should have the lower berth, and who constantly appealed to him; some of his accounts were mixed; he remembered that he had neglected to arrange for accommodations at La Cava.

The young man said that he had seen Elizabeth before luncheon. His voice was sharp; he spoke as if he were more angry than sorry over her disappearance. There had been one moment, that morning, when he had dared to put out his hand and close the book that the young lady was reading; then, from behind the machinery came a wild yell, and the steamer child burst forth.

"I saw you!" she screamed. "I saw you!"

"Well, run and tell," he commanded savagely.

But Elizabeth had refused to go. She danced about them, screaming. A sailor came forward, then a passenger. The young lady's face was scarlet. The sailor grinned. It was a sympathetic grin, but it was a grin none the less. The young lady had fled, and the young man had waited for two hours for her to reappear. It was not much wonder that he said the rumor that Elizabeth had gone overboard was entirely too good to be true. The man to whom he spoke agreed with him. He had a firm jaw, like Elizabeth's. He said that, if she were his child, he would do thus and so before he let her behave like that; he said that she had butted into him and knocked him off his feet.

"She'll turn up; don't you be afraid."

Elizabeth's mother was not disturbed at first. After luncheon she remembered that Elizabeth had not appeared,

and she sent the deck steward to find her. He said she had had her luncheon with the second table.

"I must go and look for her," said her mother; but, instead, she sat down on the foot-rest of a member of her husband's party and talked for half an hour. She said again that Elizabeth was made of quicksilver.

Presently she climbed to the hurricane-deck. There her husband and three old ladies were playing shuffleboard. One of the old ladies was a party to the dispute about berths. Mr. Myers hated shuffleboard, but he was keeping the combatants apart.

"And where is my little girl?" asked Mrs. Myers.

"I don't know. Isn't she with you?"

"I haven't seen her since this morning. I guess you'd better look for her."

Mr. Myers laid down the stick with alacrity. "I will."

Elizabeth's mother went down the steps. She walked lazily along the row of steamer chairs.

"Has any one seen my little girl?"

The eyes of the passengers met as she passed.

"No, and we don't want to," their glance seemed to say.

In fifteen minutes Elizabeth's father was walking about more swiftly. He had searched the upper deck and the promenade-deck and the stateroom and the dining-room. He could go no farther without permission and a guide. It was only Elizabeth who dared penetrate alone to steerage and hold. He went out to the bow once more and looked about. The young man, rolled up in the young lady's rug, still waited. He looked up hopefully, thinking he heard her step. Instead it was the steamer child's father At sight of him the young man sprang to his feet, remembering the rumor he had heard.

"What is the matter?"

Elizabeth's father clutched him by the arm.

"My little girl has not been seen since lunch-time. I have looked everywhere, and now the crew are searching the ship. I haven't told my wife yet. Do you know that this ship goes fifteen miles an hour, and that she has been gone for three hours?"

The warm breeze suddenly grew cold. The young man seemed to see her as on that first day, trying to look down into the water.

"Oh, we'll find her!" he said. "Certainly we'll find her."

He ran to the upper deck, and looked about carefully, even peering under the canvas over the life-boats. A sailor touched his arm.

"We've looked there, sir."

"Would it be possible for a child to get far enough out of sight of everybody to go overboard?" asked the young man.

The sailor shrugged his shoulders.

"That child could do anything. The captain's chased her off the bridge, sir. We had special orders to watch her."

It was very evident, when the young man reached the promenade-deck, that everyone knew the child was gone. Her mother's stateroom opened on the deck, and her moans could be plainly heard. Women were crying. The cross man with the jaw like Elizabeth's, his face quivering, stared back over the sea as if he expected to discover the little brown head. Every throb of the engines was audible. There was not only the sea to fear, but this relentless force that drove on and on, away from the scene of tragedy. A

prosperous Italian woman, going back in the first cabin, screamed suddenly — a shrill, heart-breaking sound. Her husband explained that her baby had been buried at sea, when they went to the new country.

The young lady had appeared now. She stood with a group of women at the forward end of the deck. Her face was white; she was listening to the stewardess telling of the thoroughness of the search.

"She can't be on the boat, ladies," she insisted. "There isn't a corner that she could get into that hasn't been searched. The only question is, when did she go over?"

The young lady walked blindly away toward the row of empty chairs. Before she reached it the young man met her.

"Come with me; don't listen to these chattering women."

Whether or not the steamer child had told, no one paid any attention to them as they went out to the bow.

"I am cold," said the young lady, shivering.

"You won't be after I wrap you up," the young man assured her comfortably. When he had folded her up closely, he looked about vainly for his own rug. He would do without it; he did not mind a little cold.

The young lady, staring out over the sea, still shivered. He wished that she would cry, and that he might put his arms about her and comfort her. It would now, alas! be perfectly safe. But the young lady was not one with whom one could take liberties. This was one of her charms. Then suddenly she solved the problem for him. She put out a shaking hand.

"Elwood, I can get along very well except when trouble comes, and then —"

"Then what?"

"Then I say to myself that I've been a — a fool."

The young man gathered her hand into both of his. He was not yet certain that he understood her aright.

"Do you mean that —"

It seemed as if death itself could not effectually silence the steamer child. There was a fiendish "Aha!" from above their heads — and there she was.

There was a hollow space inside the machinery which lifted the anchor. She had climbed up and forced herself painfully into it, wrapped in the young man's rug, and there she had lain in wait for them. The captain on the bridge had not seen her, nor the sailors idling about the bow at unch-time.

For an instant the two gaped at her. Then the young man sprang to his feet. He gave the impish face no second glance, but raced down the deck and up to the Myers' stateroom, from which shrieks like those of the Italian woman were now issuing.

He pushed open the door without knocking. Mrs. Myers lay on the couch, her husband and the doctor bent over her. Elizabeth's father saw him first. He looked like an old man.

"You haven't *found* her?"

The young man nodded. "She's out on the bow."

"*A-alive?*"

The young man smiled tremulously. "Very much so."

Elizabeth's mother sat up.

"Are you telling the truth?"

The young man had a sickening fear that he might not have seen aright — that he might have imagined her.

"Yes."

"Then take me to her!"

Her husband and the doctor begged her not to go, but she would not be dissuaded. They crowded down the narrow hall and out toward the bow.

The passengers had seen the young man running toward the Myers' room; some of them waited at the end of the hall, while other scores hastened in the direction from which he had come. There was a large audience to witness the reunion.

Elizabeth still hung suspended in the machinery. She could not get down. Wrapped in the young man's rug, she was not cold, but she was cross and hungry, and she resented the ignominy of her position. She was scolding volubly.

The ship's doctor supported Mrs. Myers.

"Give her to me!" she cried to Elizabeth's father. "John, lift her down!"

But John was not quite ready to lift her down. His face had changed again; it looked younger, and there was an added squareness of jaw that made him look like his daughter.

"Elizabeth," he said, with a new tone in his voice, "what are you doing up there?"

Elizabeth kicked and struggled.

"I hid," she cried viciously; "I hid to watch 'em hold hands. Every day I watch 'em."

There was a burst of hysterical laughter from the passengers. The young man stepped a little closer to the young lady. But she seemed to need no defense. There was a warm glow on her face which was not all embarrassment.

"He has a perfect right to hold my hand," she said quietly. "But, believe me, if he wished to do it, he would choose another place than the same boat with you, Elizabeth."

There was an instant's silence; then Elizabeth demanded again to be taken down. The ladies of the Tucker Tour began to say that Elizabeth's father was cruel. He was now looking at the young man.

"Has she annoyed you?"

The young man also enrolled himself in the black books of the ladies of the Tucker Tour.

"Intolerably," he said inhumanly.

Elizabeth's father lifted her down. The anguish with which she had racked him for the last hour still made him tremble; the spectacle that she had made of them flushed his cheek with shame. Irritation with the ladies of the Tucker Tour may have added a little valuable temper to his mood.

"Elizabeth, kiss your mother."

Elizabeth struggled to get out of his arms, but he would not let her go, even while her mother languidly embraced her. Mrs. Myers was accustomed to frights like this. The shock was already passing.

Elizabeth looked up at her father. Something in his face frightened her.

"What are you going to do?" she cried.

Mr. Myers turned to his fellow passengers.

"I wished to apologize for this exhibition," he said gravely, still holding Elizabeth.

"But, Papa!" cried Elizabeth.

There was now not only fright in her face: there was amazement and awe and a new respect.

"What are you going to do? You are not going to punish me, Papa! To — to s-spank me, Papa!"

She looked from face to face — at her mother, who did not dream that Papa would punish her; at the ladies of the Tucker Tour, whose championship, she felt dimly, only did her harm; and, finally, at the young man, her enemy. His eyes had met the young lady's; he was now too happy to take pleasure in the punishment of the steamer child.

"I am sure she will be good."

Her father looked down at her once more before he carried her away. There was now no mistaking his intention.

"Yes," he said firmly but sorrowfully, "she will."

UNCLE REUBEN[1]

By Selma Lagerlöf

There was once, nearly eighty years ago, a little boy who went out into the market-place to spin his top. The little boy's name was Reuben. He was not more than three years old, but he swung his little whip as bravely as anybody and made the top spin so that it was a pleasure to see it.

On that day, eighty years ago, it was beautiful spring weather. It was in the month of March, and the town was divided into two worlds; one white and warm, where the sun shone, and one cold and dark, where it was in shadow. The whole market-place was in the sun except a narrow edge along one row of houses.

Now it happened that the little boy, brave as he was, grew tired of spinning his top and looked about for some place to rest. It was not hard to find. There were no benches or seats, but every house was supplied with stone steps. Little Reuben could not imagine anything better.

He was a conscientious little fellow. He had a vague feeling that his mother did not like to have him sit on strange people's steps. His mother was poor, but just

[1] In "Invisible Links." Little, Brown and Company. 1909. Reprinted by permission.

on that account it must never look as if they wanted to take anything of anybody. So he went and sat on their own stone steps, for they also lived on the market-place.

The steps lay in the shadow, and it was very cold there. The little fellow leaned his head against the railing, drew up his legs and made himself comfortable. For a little while he watched the sunlight dance out in the market-place and the boys running and spinning tops — then he shut his eyes and went to sleep.

He must have slept an hour. When he awoke he did not feel so well as when he fell asleep; everything felt so dreadfully uncomfortable. He went in to his mother crying, and his mother saw that he was ill and put him to bed. And in a couple of days the boy was dead.

But that is not the end of his story. It happened that his mother mourned for him from the depths of her heart with a sorrow which defies years and death. His mother had several other children, many cares occupied her time and thoughts, but there was always a corner in her heart where her son Reuben dwelt undisturbed. He was ever alive to her. When she saw a group of children playing in the market-place, he too was running there, and when she went about her house, she believed fully and firmly that the little boy was still sitting and sleeping out on those dangerous stone steps. Certainly none of her living children were so constantly in her thoughts as her dead one.

Some years after his death little Reuben had a sister, and when she grew to be old enough to run out on the market-place and spin tops, it happened that she too sat down on the stone steps to rest. But her mother felt instantly as if some one had pulled her skirt. She

came out and seized the little sister so roughly, when she lifted her up, that she remembered it as long as she lived.

And as little did she forget how strange her mother's face was and how her voice trembled, when she said: "Do you know that you once had a little brother, whose name was Reuben, and he died because he sat on these stone steps and caught cold? You do not want to die and leave your mother, Berta?"

Brother Reuben soon became just as living to his brothers and sisters as to his mother. She was able to make them see with her eyes and they too soon saw him sitting out on the stone steps. And it naturally never occurred to them to sit down there. Yes, whenever they saw any one sitting on stone steps, or on a stone railing, or on a stone by the roadside, they felt a prick in their heart and thought of Brother Reuben.

Besides, Brother Reuben was always placed highest of all the children when they spoke of him among themselves. For they all knew that they were a troublesome and fatiguing family, who only gave their mother care and inconvenience. They could not believe that she would grieve much at losing any of them. But as she really mourned for Brother Reuben, it was certain that he must have been much better than they were.

They would often think: "Oh, if we could only give mother as much joy as Brother Reuben!" And yet no one knew anything more about him than that he had played top and caught cold on the stone steps. But he must have been something wonderful, as their mother had such a love for him.

He was wonderful too; he was more of a joy to his

mother than any of the children. Her husband died and she worked in care and want. But the children had so strong a faith in their mother's grief for the little three-year-old boy, that they were convinced that if he had lived she would not have mourned over her misfortunes. And every time they saw their mother weep, they thought that it was because Brother Reuben was dead, or because they were not like Brother Reuben. Soon enough an ever-growing desire was born in them to rival their little dead brother in their mother's affection. There was nothing that they would not have done for her, if she had only cared as much for them as for him. And it was on account of that longing, I think, that Brother Reuben did more good than any of the other children.

Fancy that when the eldest brother had earned his first money by rowing a stranger over the river, he came and gave it to his mother without reserving a penny! Then his mother looked so happy that he swelled with pride, and could not help betraying how ambitious beyond measure he had been.

"Mother, am I now as good as Brother Reuben?" His mother looked at him questioningly. She seemed as if she was comparing his fresh, glowing face with the little pale boy out on the stone steps. And she would have liked to have answered yes, if she had been able, but she could not.

"I am very fond of you, Ivan, but you will never be like Reuben."

It was beyond their powers; all the children realized it, and yet they could not help trying.

They grew up strong and capable; they worked their way up to wealth and consideration, while Brother Reuben

only sat still on his stone steps. But he still had a start; he could not be overtaken.

And at every success, every improvement, as they by degrees were able to offer their mother a good home and comfort, it had to be reward enough for them for their mother to say: "Ah, if my little Reuben could have seen that!"

Brother Reuben followed his mother through the whole of her life, even to her deathbed. It was he who robbed the death pangs of their sting, since she knew that they bore her to him. In the midst of her greatest suffering the mother could smile at the thought that she was going to meet little Reuben.

And so died one whose faithful love had exalted and deified a poor little three-year-old boy.

But neither was that the end of little Reuben's story. To all the brothers and sisters he had become a symbol of their life of endeavor, of their love for their mother, of all the touching memories from the years of struggle and failure. There was always something rich and warm in their voices when they spoke of him.

So he also glided into the lives of the children of his brothers and sisters. His mother's love had raised him to greatness, and the great influence generation after generation.

Sister Berta had a son, who had much to do with Uncle Reuben.

He was four years old the day he sat on the curbstone and stared down into the gutter. It was full of rain water. Sticks and straws were carried past in wild swirlings down to the sea. The little boy sat and looked on with that pleasant calm that people feel in following the

adventurous existence of others, when they themselves are in safety.

But his peaceful philosophizing was interrupted by his mother, who, the moment she saw him, thought of the stone steps at home and of her brother.

"Oh, my dear little boy," she said, "do not sit there! Do you know that your mamma had a little brother whose name was Reuben, and he was four years old just like you? He died because he sat on just such a curbstone and caught cold."

The little boy did not like being disturbed in his pleasant thoughts. He sat still and philosophized, while his yellow, curly hair fell down into his eyes.

Berta would not have done it for any one else, but for her dear brother's sake she shook her little boy quite roughly. And so he learned respect for Uncle Reuben.

Another time this little yellow-haired man had fallen on the ice; he had been thrown down out of sheer spite by a big, naughty boy, and there he sat and cried to show how badly he had been treated, especially as his mother could not be very far off.

But he had forgotten that his mother was first and last Uncle Reuben's sister. When she caught sight of Axel sitting on the ice, she did not come with anything soothing or consoling, but only with that everlasting:

"Do not sit so, my little boy! Think of Uncle Reuben, who died when he was five years old, just as you are now, because he sat down in a snow-drift."

The boy stood up instantly when he heard her speak of Uncle Reuben, but he felt a chill in his very heart. How could mamma talk about Uncle Reuben when her little boy was in such distress! Axel had no objection to his

sitting and dying wherever he pleased, but now it seemed as if he wished to take his own mamma away from him, and that Axel could not bear. So he learned to hate Uncle Reuben.

High up on the stairway in Axel's home was a stone railing, which was dizzily beautiful to sit on. Far below lay the stone floor of the hall, and he who sat astride up there could dream that he was being borne along over abysses. Axel called the balustrade the good steed Grane. On his back he bounded over burning ramparts into an enchanted castle. There he sat proud and bold with his long curls waving, and fought Saint George's fight with the dragon. And as yet it had not occurred to Uncle Reuben to want to ride there.

But of course he came. Just as the dragon was writhing in the agony of death and Axel sat in lofty consciousness of victory, he heard his nurse call: "Little Axel, do not sit there! Think of Uncle Reuben, who died, when he was eight years old, just as you are now, because he sat and rode on a stone railing. You must never sit there again."

Such a jealous old pudding-head, that Uncle Reuben! He could not bear it, of course, because Axel was killing dragons and rescuing princesses. If he did not look out, he, Axel, would show that he could win glory too. If he should jump down to that stone floor and dash his brains out, he would feel himself thrown into the shade, that big liar.

Poor Uncle Reuben! The poor, good little boy who went to play top out in the sunny market-place! Now he was to learn what it was to be a great man.

It was in the country at Uncle Ivan's. A number of the cousins had gathered in the beautiful garden. Axel was there, filled with his hatred of his Uncle Reuben. He

was longing to know if he was tormenting any other besides himself, but there was something which made him afraid to ask. It was as if he was going to commit some sacrilege.

At last the children were left to themselves. No big people were present. Then Axel asked if they had ever heard of Uncle Reuben.

He saw how all the eyes flashed and that many small fists were clenched, but it seemed as if the little mouths had been taught respect for Uncle Reuben. "Hush!" said the whole crowd.

"No!" said Axel; "I want to know if there is any one else whom he tortures, for I think he is the most troublesome of all uncles."

That one brave word broke the dam which had held in the indignation of those tormented child-hearts. There was a great murmuring and shouting. So must a crowd of nihilists look when they revile an autocrat.

The poor, great man's register of sins was unrolled. Uncle Reuben persecuted the children of all his brothers and sisters. Uncle Reuben died wherever he chose. Uncle Reuben was always the same age as the child whose peace he wished to disturb.

And they had to show respect to him, although he was quite plainly a liar. They might hate him in the most silent depths of their heart, but overlook him or show him disrespect, no, then they were stopped.

What an air the old people put on when they spoke of him! Had he ever really done anything so wonderful? To sit down and die was nothing so surprising. And whatever great thing he may have done, it was certain that he was now abusing his power. He opposed the children in

everything that they wanted to do, the old scarecrow. He drove them from a noonday nap in the grass. He had discovered their best hiding places in the park and forbidden them to go there. His last performance was to ride on barebacked horses and to drive in the hay-rigging.

They were all sure that the poor thing had never been more than three years old. And now he fell upon the big children of fourteen and insisted that he was their age. It was the most provoking thing.

It was perfectly incredible what came to light about him. He had fished from the dam; he had rowed in the little flat-bottomed boat; he had climbed up in the willow which hangs over the water, and in which it was so nice to sit; yes, he had even slept on the powder-horn.

But they were all certain that there was no escape from his tyranny. It was a relief to have spoken out, but not a remedy. They could not rebel against Uncle Reuben.

You never would have believed it, but when these children grew to be big and had children of their own, they immediately began to make use of Uncle Reuben, just as their parents had done before them.

And their children again, the young people who are growing up now, have learned their lesson so well, that it happened one summer out in the country that a five-year-old boy came up to his old grandmother Berta, who had sat down on the steps while waiting for the carriage:—

"Grandmother once had a brother whose name was Reuben."

"You are quite right, my little boy," grandmother said, and stood up instantly.

That was as much of a sign to the young people as if

they had seen an old Royalist bow before King Charles' portrait. It made them understand that Uncle Reuben always must remain great, however he abused his position, only because he had been so deeply loved.

In these days, when all greatness is so carefully examined, he has to be used with greater moderation than formerly. The limit for his age is lower; trees, boats and powder-horns are safe from him, but nothing of stone which can be sat upon can escape him.

And the children, the children of the day, treat him quite otherwise than their parents did. They criticise him openly and frankly. Their parents no longer understand how to inspire blind, terrified obedience. Little boarding-school girls discuss Uncle Reuben and wonder if he is anything but a myth. A six-year-old child proposes that he should prove by experiment that it is impossible to catch a mortal cold on stone steps.

But that is only a passing mood. That generation in their heart of hearts is just as convinced of Uncle Reuben's greatness as the preceding one and obey him just as they did.

The day will come when those scoffers will go down to the home of their ancestors, try to find the old stone steps, and raise on it a tablet with a golden inscription.

They joke about Uncle Reuben for a few years, but as soon as they are grown and have children to bring up, they will become convinced of the use and need of the great man.

"Oh, my little child, do not sit on those stone steps! Your mother's mother had an uncle whose name was Reuben. He died when he was your age, because he sat down to rest on just such steps."

So will it be as long as the world lasts.

THE ROUT OF THE WHITE HUSSARS[1]

By Rudyard Kipling

It was not in the open fight
We threw away the sword,
But in the lonely watching
In the darkness by the ford.
The waters lapped, the night-wind blew,
Full-armed the Fear was born and grew,
And we were flying ere we knew
From panic in the night.

— Beoni Bar.

Some people hold that an English Cavalry regiment cannot run. This is a mistake. I have seen four hundred and thirty-seven sabres flying over the face of the country in abject terror — have seen the best Regiment that ever drew bridle wiped off the Army List for the space of two hours. If you repeat this tale to the White Hussars they will, in all probability, treat you severely. They are not proud of the incident.

You may know the White Hussars by their "side," which is greater than that of all the Cavalry Regiments on the roster. If this is not a sufficient mark, you may know them by their old brandy. It has been sixty years

[1] From "Plain Tales from the Hills."

in the Mess and is worth going far to taste. Ask for the "McGaire" old brandy, and see that you get it. If the Mess Sergeant thinks that you are uneducated, and that the genuine article will be lost on you, he will treat you accordingly. He is a good man. But, when you are at Mess, you must never talk to your hosts about forced marches or long-distance rides. The Mess are very sensitive; and, if they think that you are laughing at them, will tell you so.

As the White Hussars say, it was all the Colonel's fault. He was a new man, and he ought never to have taken the Command. He said that the Regiment was not smart enough. This to the White Hussars, who knew that they could walk around any Horse and through any Guns, and over any Foot on the face of the earth! That insult was the first cause of offence.

Then the Colonel cast the Drum-Horse — the Drum-Horse of the White Hussars! Perhaps you do not see what an unspeakable crime he had committed. I will try to make it clear. The soul of the Regiment lives in the Drum-Horse who carries the silver kettle-drums. He is nearly always a big piebald Waler. That is a point of honor; and a Regiment will spend anything you please on a piebald. He is beyond the ordinary laws of casting. His work is very light, and he only manœuvres at a footpace. Wherefore, so long as he can step out and look handsome, his well-being is assured. He knows more about the Regiment than the Adjutant, and could not make a mistake if he tried.

The Drum-Horse of the White Hussars was only eighteen years old, and perfectly equal to his duties. He had at least six years' more work in him, and carried himself with

ll the pomp and dignity of a Drum-Major of the Guards. The Regiment had paid Rs. 1200 for him.

But the Colonel said that he must go, and he was cast in due form and replaced by a washy, bay beast, as ugly as a mule, with a ewe-neck, rat-tail, and cow-hocks. The Drummer detested that animal, and the best of the Band-horses put back their ears and showed the whites of their eyes at the very sight of him. They knew him for an upstart and no gentleman. I fancy that the Colonel's ideas of smartness extended to the Band, and that he wanted to make it take part in the regular parade movements. A Cavalry Band is a sacred thing. It only turns out for Commanding Officers' parades, and the Band Master is one degree more important than the Colonel. He is a High Priest and the "Keel Row" is his holy song. The "Keel Row" is the Cavalry Trot; and the man who has never heard that tune rising, high and shrill, above the rattle of the Regiment going past the saluting-base, has something yet to hear and understand.

When the Colonel cast the Drum-Horse of the White Hussars, there was nearly a mutiny.

The officers were angry, the Regiment were furious, and the Bandsmen swore — like troopers. The Drum-Horse was going to be put up to auction — public auction — to be bought, perhaps, by a Parsee and put into a cart! It was worse than exposing the inner life of the Regiment to the whole world, or selling the Mess Plate to a Jew — a Black Jew.

The Colonel was a mean man and a bully. He knew what the Regiment thought about his action; and, when the troopers offered to buy the Drum-Horse, he said that their offer was mutinous and forbidden by the Regulations.

But one of the Subalterns — Hogan-Yale, an Irishman — bought the Drum-Horse for Rs. 160 at the sale, and the Colonel was wroth. Yale professed repentance — he was unnaturally submissive — and said that, as he had only made the purchase to save the horse from possible ill-treatment and starvation, he would now shoot him and end the business. This appeared to soothe the Colonel, for he wanted the Drum-Horse disposed of. He felt that he had made a mistake, and could not of course acknowledge it. Meantime, the presence of the Drum-Horse was an annoyance to him.

Yale took to himself a glass of old brandy, three cheroots, and his friend Martyn; and they all left the Mess together. Yale and Martyn conferred for two hours in Yale's quarters; but only the bull-terrier who keeps watch over Yale's boot-trees knows what they said. A horse, hooded and sheeted to his ears, left Yale's stables and was taken, very unwillingly, into the Civil Lines. Yale's groom went with him. Two men broke into the Regimental Theatre and took several paint-pots and some large scenery-brushes. Then night fell over the Cantonments, and there was a noise as of a horse kicking his loose-box to pieces in Yale's stables. Yale had a big, old, white Waler trap-horse.

The next day was a Thursday, and the men, hearing that Yale was going to shoot the Drum-Horse in the evening determined to give the beast a regular regimental funeral — a finer one than they would have given the Colonel had he died just then. They got a bullock-cart and some sacking, and mounds and mounds of roses, and the body under sacking, was carried out to the place where the anthrax cases were cremated; two-thirds of the Regiment following. There was no Band, but they all sang "The

Place where the old Horse died" as something respectful and appropriate to the occasion. When the corpse was dumped into the grave and the men began throwing down armfuls of roses to cover it, the Farrier-Sergeant ripped out an oath and said aloud, "Why, it ain't the Drum-Horse any more than it's me!" The Troop Sergeant-Majors asked him whether he had left his head in the Canteen. The Farrier-Sergeant said that he knew the Drum-Horse's feet as well as he knew his own; but he was silenced when he saw the regimental number burned in on the poor stiff, upturned near-fore.

Thus was the Drum-Horse of the White Hussars buried; the Farrier-Sergeant grumbled. The sacking that covered the corpse was smeared in places with black paint; and the Farrier-Sergeant drew attention to this fact. But the Troop-Sergeant-Major of E Troop kicked him severely on the shin, and told him that he was undoubtedly drunk.

On the Monday following the burial, the Colonel sought revenge on the White Hussars. Unfortunately, being at that time temporarily in Command of the Station, he ordered a Brigade field-day. He said that he wished to make the Regiment "sweat for their damned insolence," and he carried out his notion thoroughly. That Monday was one of the hardest days in the memory of the White Hussars. They were thrown against a skeleton-enemy, and pushed forward, and withdrawn, and dismounted, and "scientifically handled" in every possible fashion over dusty country, till they sweated profusely. Their only amusement came late in the day when they fell upon the battery of Horse Artillery and chased it for two miles. This was a personal question, and most of the troopers had

money on the event; the Gunners saying openly that the had the legs of the White Hussars. They were wrong A march-past concluded the campaign, and when the Reg ment got back to their Lines, the men were coated wit dirt from spur to chin-strap.

The White Hussars have one great and peculiar privileg They won it at Fontenoy, I think.

Many Regiments possess special rights such as wearin collars with undress uniform, or a bow of riband betwee the shoulders, or red and white roses in their helmets o certain days of the year. Some rights are connected wit regimental saints, and some with regimental successes All are valued highly; but none so highly as the right of th White Hussars to have the Band playing when their horse are being watered in the Lines. Only one tune is playe and that tune never varies. I don't know its real nam but the White Hussars call it, "Take me to London again. It sounds very pretty. The Regiment would sooner b struck off the roster than forego their distinction.

After the "dismiss" was sounded, the officers rode o home to prepare for stables; and the men filed into th lines riding easy. That is to say, they opened their tigh buttons, shifted their helmets, and began to joke or t swear as the humor took them; the more careful slippin off and easing girths and curbs. A good trooper values h mount exactly as much as he values himself, and believe or should believe, that the two together are irresistibl where women or men, girls or guns, are concerned.

Then the Orderly-Officer gave the order, "Wate horses," and the Regiment loafed off to the squadron troughs which were in rear of the stables and betwee these and the barracks. There were four huge trough

one for each squadron, arranged *en échelon*, so that the whole Regiment could water in ten minutes if it liked. But it lingered for seventeen, as a rule, while the Band played.

The Band struck up as the squadrons filed off to the troughs, and the men slipped their feet out of the stirrups and chaffed each other. The sun was just setting in a big, hot bed of red cloud, and the road to the Civil Lines seemed to run straight into the sun's eye. There was a little dot on the road. It grew and grew till it showed as a horse, with a sort of gridiron-thing on his back. The red cloud glared through the bars of the gridiron. Some of the troopers shaded their eyes with their hands and said — "What the mischief 'as that there 'orse got on 'im?"

In another minute they heard a neigh that every soul — horse and man — in the Regiment knew, and saw, heading straight toward the Band, the dead Drum-Horse of the White Hussars!

On his withers banged and bumped the kettle-drums draped in crape, and on his back, stiff and soldierly, sat a bareheaded skeleton.

The Band stopped playing, and, for a moment, there was a hush.

Then some one in E Troop — men said it was the Troop Sergeant-Major — swung his horse round and yelled. No one can account exactly for what happened afterward; but it seems that, at least, one man in each troop set an example of panic, and the rest followed like sheep. The horses that had barely put their muzzles into the troughs reared and capered; but as soon as the Band broke, which it did when the ghost of the Drum-

Horse was about a furlong distant, all hooves followed suit and the clatter of the stampede — quite different from the orderly throb and roar of a movement on parade, or the rough horse-play of watering in camp — made them only more terrified. They felt that the men on their backs were afraid of something. When horses once know that, all is over except the butchery.

Troop after troop turned from the troughs and ran — anywhere and everywhere — like spilled quicksilver. It was a most extraordinary spectacle, for men and horses were in all stages of easiness, and the carbine-buckets flopping against their sides urged the horses on. Men were shouting and cursing, and trying to pull clear of the Band which was being chased by the Drum-Horse whose rider had fallen forward and seemed to be spurring for a wager.

The Colonel had gone over to the Mess for a drink. Most of the officers were with him, and the Subaltern of the Day was preparing to go down to the lines, and receive the watering reports from the Troop Sergeant-Majors. When "Take me to London again" stopped, after twenty bars, every one in the Mess said, "What on earth has happened?" A minute later, they heard unmilitary noises, and saw, far across the plain, the White Hussars scattered, and broken, and flying.

The Colonel was speechless with rage, for he thought that the Regiment had risen against him or was unanimously drunk. The Band, a disorganized mob, tore past and at its heels labored the Drum-Horse — the dead and buried Drum-Horse — with the jolting, clattering skeleton. Hogan-Yale whispered to Martyn — "No wire will stand that treatment," and the Band, which had doubled like

hare, came back again. But the rest of the Regiment was gone, was rioting all over the Province, for the dusk had shut in and each man was howling to his neighbor that the Drum-Horse was on his flank. Troop-horses are far too tenderly treated as a rule. They can, on emergencies, do a great deal, even with seventeen stone on their backs. As the troopers found out.

How long this panic lasted I cannot say. I believe that when the moon rose the men saw they had nothing to fear, and, by twos and threes and half-troops, crept back into Cantonments very much ashamed of themselves. Meantime, the Drum-Horse, disgusted at his treatment by old friends, pulled up, wheeled round, and trotted up to the Mess veranda-steps for bread. No one liked to run; but no one cared to go forward till the Colonel made a movement and laid hold of the skeleton's foot. The Band had halted some distance away, and now came back slowly. The Colonel called it, individually and collectively, every evil name that occurred to him at the time; for he had set his hand on the bosom of the Drum-Horse and found flesh and blood. Then he beat the kettle-drums with his clenched fist, and discovered that they were but made of silvered paper and bamboo. Next, still swearing, he tried to drag the skeleton out of the saddle, but found that it had been wired into the cantle. The sight of the Colonel, with his arms round the skeleton's pelvis and his knee in the old Drum-Horse's stomach, was striking. Not to say amusing. He worried the thing off in a minute or two, and threw it down on the ground, saying to the Band — "Here, you curs, that's what you're afraid of." The skeleton did not look pretty in the twilight. The Band-Sergeant seemed to recognize it, for

he began to chuckle and choke. "Shall I take it away?" said the Band-Sergeant. "Yes," said the Colonel, "take it to Hell, and ride there yourselves!"

The Band-Sergeant saluted, hoisted the skeleton across his saddle-bow, and led off to the stables. Then the Colonel began to make inquiries for the rest of the Regiment, and the language he used was wonderful. He would disband the Regiment — he would court-martial every soul in it — he would not command such a set of rabble, and so on, and so on. As the men dropped in, his language grew wilder, until at last it exceeded the utmost limits of free speech allowed even to a Colonel of Horse.

Martyn took Hogan-Yale aside and suggested compulsory retirement from the Service as a necessity when all was discovered. Martyn was the weaker man of the two. Hogan-Yale put up his eyebrows and remarked, firstly, that he was the son of a Lord, and, secondly, that he was as innocent as the babe unborn of the theatrical resurrection of the Drum-Horse.

"My instructions," said Yale, with a singularly sweet smile, "were that the Drum-Horse should be sent back as impressively as possible. I ask you, *am* I responsible if a mule-headed friend sends him back in such a manner as to disturb the peace of mind of a regiment of Her Majesty's Cavalry?"

Martyn said, "You are a great man, and will in time become a General; but I'd give my chance of a troop to be safe out of this affair."

Providence saved Martyn and Hogan-Yale. The Second-in-Command led the Colonel away to the little curtained alcove wherein the Subalterns of the White

Hussars were accustomed to play poker of nights; and there, after many oaths on the Colonel's part, they talked together in low tones. I fancy that the Second-in-Command must have represented the scare as the work of some trooper whom it would be hopeless to detect; and I know that he dwelt upon the sin and the shame of making a public laughing-stock of the scare.

"They will call us," said the Second-in-Command, who had really a fine imagination — "they will call us the 'Fly-by-Nights'; they will call us the 'Ghost Hunters'; they will nickname us from one end of the Army List to the other. All the explanation in the world won't make outsiders understand that the officers were away when the panic began. For the honor of the Regiment and for your own sake keep this thing quiet."

The Colonel was so exhausted with anger that soothing him down was not so difficult as might be imagined. He was made to see, gently and by degrees, that it was obviously impossible to court-martial the whole Regiment and equally impossible to proceed against any subaltern who, in his belief, had any concern in the hoax.

"But the beast's alive! He's never been shot at all!" shouted the Colonel. "It's flat flagrant disobedience! I've known a man broke for less — damn sight less. They're mocking me, I tell you, Mutman! They're mocking me!"

Once more, the Second-in-Command set himself to soothe the Colonel, and wrestled with him for half an hour. At the end of that time, the Regimental Sergeant-Major reported himself. The situation was rather novel to him; but he was not a man to be put out by circumstances. He saluted and said, "Regiment all come back, Sir." Then,

to propitiate the Colonel — "An' none of the 'orses any the worse, Sir."

The Colonel only snorted and answered — "You'd better tuck the men into their cots, then, and see that they don't wake up and cry in the night." The Sergeant withdrew.

His little stroke of humor pleased the Colonel, and, further, he felt slightly ashamed of the language he had been using. The Second-in-Command worried him again, and the two sat talking far into the night.

Next day but one, there was a Commanding Officer's parade, and the Colonel harangued the White Hussars vigorously. The pith of his speech was that, since the Drum-Horse in his old age had proved himself capable of cutting up the whole Regiment, he should return to his post of pride at the head of the Band, *but* the Regiment were a set of ruffians with bad consciences.

The White Hussars shouted, and threw everything movable about them into the air, and when the parade was over, they cheered the Colonel till they couldn't speak. No cheers were put up for Lieutenant Hogan-Yale, who smiled very sweetly in the background.

Said the Second-in-Command to the Colonel, unofficially —

"These little things ensure popularity, and do not the least affect discipline."

"But I went back on my word," said the Colonel.

"Never mind," said the Second-in-Command. "The White Hussars will follow you anywhere from to-day. Regiments are just like women. They will do anything for trinketry."

A week later, Hogan-Yale received an extraordinary

letter from some one who signed himself "Secretary, *Charity and Zeal*, 3709, E. C.," and asked for "the return of our skeleton which we have reason to believe is in your possession."

"Who the deuce is this lunatic who trades in bones?" said Hogan-Yale.

"Beg your pardon, Sir," said the Band-Sergeant, "but the skeleton is with me, an' I'll return it if you'll pay the carriage into the Civil Lines. There's a coffin with it, Sir.".

Hogan-Yale smiled and handed two rupees to the Band-Sergeant, saying, "Write the date on the skull, will you?"

If you doubt this story, and know where to go, you can see the date on the skeleton. But don't mention the matter to the White Hussars.

I happened to know something about it, because I prepared the Drum-Horse for his resurrection. He did not take kindly to the skeleton at all.

PERJURED [1]

By Edith Ronald Mirrielees

A lie well stuck to —

It began with no more than a word, such as a man might speak and forget he had spoken. At the time of speaking, Robbins Nelson was standing with a group of other youths — lads in their late 'teens and early twenties — on the Sutro Station platform. All their eyes were on the approaching train, and all their tongues were busy with a single topic.

Robbins was the youngest member of the group, — barely turned sixteen. Usually he hung somewhat unregarded on its edge, but to-day, bold in the possession of first-hand knowledge, he thrust himself into the heart of the talk.

"I looked right down on him, close as I am to you. I was walking along over that cut where the train comes through. Gee, his head looked three-cornered! I yelled, but the engineer did n't know what I meant. Anyhow, they would n't have stopped — nothing but a hobo."

"No good if they had," an older speaker took up the

[1] In *The Atlantic Monthly*, November, 1912. Reprinted with the permission of *The Atlantic Monthly* and the author.

words. "He was done for. Did n't speak but once after they got him off. 'Don't hit me,' he says. I s'pose when they run into the tunnel and whatever it was jammed into him —"

"He did n't get hurt in any tunnel," Robbins asserted. The color flared into his face with the intensity of his conviction. The horrid memory of the man set him to blinking. "He could n't get hurt if he was lying down, could he? And if he was standing up, it 'd knock him off, would n't it? It was n't any tunnel —"

He broke off, aware suddenly of the smiling ridicule in the faces round him. Grotend, brother-in-law to the coroner who had held the inquest, laughed good-temperedly.

"Go it, William J. Burns, Junior! I s'pose some fancy murderer crawled up on top between stations. Or he got jolted down out of an air-ship. It 'd take something like that —"

Grotend was popular with the group. Their ready laughter rewarded the attack. And the younger boy's crimson misery was an invitation to further teasing.

"You had n't ought to be stingy with bright ideas like that, Nelse. He sent you an anonymous letter, did n't he? Or maybe you saw a man in a black mask beating him up —"

"No, I did n't!" said Robbins loudly. He cast about desperately in his mind for a means of escape. "I did n't see anybody beating him up, but I saw Jim Whiting coming down off the end of the car."

A hush followed his statement — a tribute to the weight of it. Grotend, his lips parted for a fresh jibe, drew in his breath sharply as though in the shock of a cold douche. Then, —

"You saw Jim Whiting?" he reiterated.

Jim Whiting was brakeman on the local freight, a figure familiar enough to all of them.

"Getting deaf, are n't you?" Robbins retorted.

He turned his back upon his tormentors and walked away across the platform.

He was not much impressed with the importance of his lie. Chiefly, he was elated that there had come to him a lie suitable to turn the tables. Half-way home his elation lasted, to be crowded out only by the recurring memory of the injured tramp. The boy had never before seen violent death. The picture of the man as he sped past, bloody and misshapen, on the swaying car-top; the later picture of him borne up the street on the improvised stretcher came back upon him hideously. That for such destruction, that for such wanton suffering, there should be no punishable agent, seemed intolerable. And the idea once presented, who so likely as Whiting —

He heard the beat of footsteps behind him, and Grotendo breathing quickly, swung into pace at his side.

"I been trying to catch up with you," he explained unnecessarily. "Say, when Jim come out on the platform I spoke to him. I says, 'One of the fellows says he saw you up on top that day the tramp got hurt.' And you 'd ought to seen him. I guess he knew —"

"What 'd he say?" Robbins interrupted.

"All he says was, 'You tell that fellow he 's a liar'; but if you 'd seen the look on him —"

"Don't you tell him I said it," the younger boy cautioned. "I don't want him down on me." A belated stir of conscience set him to hedging. "Anyhow, I did n't say I saw him up on the car. All I saw was when he was

just there on those iron steps on the side. I don't know if he was going up or down."

They stood at the Nelson gate for a little, talking. It was full dark when Robbins went up the shrub-lined path to the porch. In the lighted dining-room his mother and the younger children were already at supper.

"Late, Robbins," Mrs. Nelson admonished as he slid into his place. Then, catching sight of his face, "Tired out? If it 's that accident that 's worrying you —"

"It 's not," the boy denied. He felt his cheeks grow hot with a sudden flush of annoyance. "I don't see what I 'd worry about that for. Only, Charlie Grotend told Mr. Whiting I saw him on the car that day, and it made Whiting mad. I was wishing he had n't."

"You did n't say anything more than that — that he could have helped it, or anything like that? Well, then!" She put the discussion aside with a gesture. "Merle Williams telephoned to see if you 'd come over there to-night. You might as well. There 's no use brooding —"

"I 'm *not!*" Robbins flung back angrily.

His spirits lightened somewhat in the process of dressing for his outing. They lightened still more when, on his way to the place of entertainment, he came up with three or four of his mates similarly bound, and went on with them, easily the hero of the little group. Sutro, though a country-seat, was a place of few excitements. The finding of the injured tramp, his death, the inquest, which had been held that day, were topics of surpassing interest, and Robbins, by virtue of his momentary contact, found his importance measurably enhanced. Before the evening was over, he had told his story a half-dozen times, — each

time with less repulsion, with a keener sense of its dramatic value.

"I was walking along the cut — you know, there where the train goes under you — and I saw him and yelled at the engineer to stop. I thought he was dead already — he looked like it. I don't know what I yelled for, only I thought he 'd roll off. No, I did n't say I saw Whiting up on top, —" He adhered scrupulously to the form of his first telling, — "I saw him on those steps on the side. I 'd called to him, too, if I 'd seen him in time, but I did n't."

"I bet he 'd have understood," suggested one of the listeners.

There was something cynical, something appalling, in the fashion in which their untempered youth seized upon the idea of guilt as the concomitant of injury. Robbins, tramping home a half-hour after midnight, felt all round him the concurrence of his mates — a warm supporting wave. He was committed beyond retreat now to his theory. Almost he was self-deceived. Visualizing the scene, he could scarcely have said whether, actually, he saw Whiting's big body flattened against the side of the car, or whether he himself had superimposed the detail.

He slept late next morning, and emerging, discovered his mother, red-eyed, moving restlessly between kitchen and dining-room. She called to him as he came out, but it was not until he was seated before his oven-dried breakfast that, with a long breath, as though she braced herself, —

"Mrs. Cartwright was here this morning," she observed. The words were indifferent, but the tone was so full of significance that instinctively the boy stopped eating to listen.

"She 'd been sitting up last night with Mrs. Morgan. Robbins, that boy — that poor boy — was n't a tramp at all. He was Charlie Morgan, trying to beat his way back home."

"How 'd they know?" Robbins asked.

"Something about the body. There was some mark. It 's dreadful for his mother. And it 's worse because she thinks — Mrs. Cartwright says a good many people think — it was n't an accident at all. The wound don't look like it. And then your seeing Mr. Whiting —"

"What 'd you tell her that for?" Robbins muttered.

He pushed back his chair, his hunger vanished as though from feasting.

"I did n't. She told me. She says that man who has the truck-garden — Emerson, is n't it? — is saying he saw Mr. Whiting on the car-roof and recognized him. But, of course, a man like that —"

Her tone disposed effectually of the second witness. She got to her feet and began to gather up the dishes from the table.

"Mrs. Cartwright says Mr. Cartwright's looking into the thing. In his position, he 'd have to. I told her you 'd go up to his office —" She was passing behind Robbins's chair as she spoke. To his amazement, she stooped and laid her cheek for an instant against his shoulder. "Don't you let him worry you, Robbie. You just stick to your story," she counseled.

"I 'm not going near him," Robbins declared defiantly.

More than the hush of appreciation at his first statement, more than the news of Whiting's anger, his mother's unexpected caress impressed upon him the seriousness of his position.

When he left the house, breakfast ended, he was fixed in his determination neither to get within reach of Cartwright, who was county attorney, nor to repeat his story. But once upon the street he found to his consternation that the story no longer needed his repetition. It traveled on every tongue, growing as it went. Nor was there lacking other evidence to support it. The examining physician shook his head over the shape and nature of the fatal wound; the helpers who had carried the man were swift to recollect his dying words. From somewhere there sprang the rumor of long-standing feud between Whiting and Charlie Morgan. Then it was no more a rumor but an established fact — time, place, and enhancing circumstances all known and repeated.

"Enough to hang anybody," Grotend summed up the evidence, following with his coterie the trend of gossip. "Only thing is, it 's funny the sort of people that do all the hearing and seeing." He put his arm round Robbins's shoulders. "There 's Nelse here and Doc. Simpson — they 're all right; but look at the rest of 'em — If they said it was a nice day, I 'd know it was raining. Take that Emerson fellow —"

"Well, if Nelse saw him on the side, I don't see why Emerson could n't see him on top; he must 'a' been there," a listener protested; and Robbins, his throat constricted, drew out of hearing.

For the most part, however, he found a lively satisfaction in the increase of rumor. In such a mass of testimony, he reasoned, his own bit of spurious evidence was wholly unimportant. When that day and a second and still a third had passed with no demand upon him, his oppression vanished. Even the news of Whiting's arrest did not

greatly disturb him. There was now and then a minute of sick discomfort, — once when the truck-gardener attempted to hob-nob with him on the strength of their common information; once and more acutely when an overheard conversation warned him that the accused man was depending upon an alibi, — but for the most part he put the danger of discovery resolutely out of his mind. Even should the alibi be forthcoming and his own story go thereby to the ground, "They can't be sure about it," he comforted himself. "They can't know I did n't —" Even in his thought he left the phrase unfinished.

It was the fourth day after Whiting's arrest that, going toward home in the early evening, he heard his name spoken from behind, and turning saw the county attorney. His first barely inhibited impulse was toward flight, but it was already too late for that. The elder man's greeting detained him as by a hand upon his arm. He halted reluctantly, and they went on side by side.

The county attorney was a man in his early sixties — a tall stooping figure, gray-haired, with an habitual courtesy of manner which, more than irascibility, intimidated his younger neighbors. It was a part of his courtesy, now, to begin far-off from the subject at hand, in an effort, foredoomed to failure, to put his auditor at ease.

"I often watch you tall boys going past, and remind myself that I am getting old. I can remember most of you in your carriages. Indeed, with you, your father and I were law students together. And now you 're in high school, your mother tells me." And with hardly a shift of tone, "She tells me, too, — or rather my wife does, — that you were unfortunate enough to see Mr. Whiting on the day of poor Morgan's death. I am sorry —"

"I — did n't see him do anything," Robbins protested. His tongue was suddenly thick and furry, and the words came with difficulty. "Nothing I could swear to. He was just — there."

He was staring straight ahead; he could not see how shrewd were the kindly eyes which measured him.

"Timid," the lawyer was labeling his witness. "Sensitive. Over-scrupulous. He 'd scruple his testimony out of existence."

Aloud he spoke with grave reassurance. "Your merely seeing Mr. Whiting can do him no harm. Indeed, you may not be needed at all. The preliminary examination having been waived —" He paused for a moment before the Nelson gate, his thin-featured old face remote and serious. "In any case, remember this, my boy. Nothing is ever required of you on the witness stand except to tell your story exactly as you have told it off the stand. In the end the truth will come out and no innocent man be harmed."

He congratulated himself as he went on up the street that he had reassured the lad, put before him his irresponsibility in its true light. Had he looked back, he might have seen the reassured witness staring after him in a kind of horror of amazement. To Robbins it was as though, astoundingly, an outsider had voiced the thought of his own heart. That truth must prevail, that false witnesses would be brought to confusion — it was a belief ingrained into the fibre of his being. He was sick with a premonition of disgrace.

"Only, they can't *know*," he tried to hearten himself. "I can stick to it I did." He stood still a moment, the line of his sensitive chin grown suddenly hard. "And

I 've got to stick to it," he warned himself. "I 've got to stick it out as long as I live."

It did not need the country attorney's advice to keep him away from the court-room during the opening days of the trial. With all the youthful masculinity of Sutro crowding the court-house steps, Robbins sat at home in the hot, darkened parlor, reading from books pulled down at random, seeing always, no matter what he read, a room set thick with eyes, eyes scornful, eyes reproachful, eyes speculative.

When at last the ordeal came, it was so much less dreadful than his anticipation of it that he was conscious of an immediate relief. There was, indeed, a minute of blind confusion as he made his way toward the stand — voices singing in his ears, a blue mist before his eyes. Then, somehow, he was sworn and seated, and all round him were the friendly faces of neighbors. He could see the judge nod encouragement to him over his desk; he could see the bracing kindness of the county attorney's glance. Whiting he could not see, the bowed shoulders of a reporter intervening.

He was scarcely nervous after the first moments. His story flowed from him without effort, almost without volition. "I was walking along the track — I 'd been fishing —" It seemed to him that he had said the words a million times.

There were interruptions now and then; objections; questions from a round-faced, deep-voiced youngster, who, Robbins divined presently, was Whiting's lawyer; but all of it — the narrative, the pauses, the replies — came with the regular, effortless movement of well-oiled machinery. He could have laughed at the puerile efforts

of the defense to break down his story. — "Was he sure that he knew James Whiting?" Was there a resident of Sutro who did not know him? "Could he swear, — taking thought that he was under oath, — could he *swear* that the man on the side of the car was James Whiting and not some other man resembling him? If, on a moving train, another man resembling James Whiting, of about James Whiting's size —"

"He knows he can't touch me," Robbins was thinking triumphantly. "He knows it!"

The question of truth or falsehood was quite removed from him now. He came down from the stand finely elated, and in the afternoon went back of his own accord to the court-room. Emerson, the truck-gardener, was under examination and faring badly. One by one, the damaging facts of his past came out against him — an arrest for theft, a jail sentence for vagrancy, a quarrel with the prisoner, proved threats. The victim emerged limp from the ordeal, and slunk his way from the room, wholly discredited.

"Served him right, though," Robbins quenched his momentary pity. "I knew all the time he was lying." He started suddenly, so violently that the listener seated next him turned in irritation. "And," it had flashed through his mind, "and he knew I was!"

His eyes sought the prisoner — the man who also knew — where he sat hunched heavily forward in his chair, his arms upon the table. For an instant, pity, like some racking physical pain, shot through Robbins. To be caught in such a web! To be caught through no fault of his own! It was the first time the purely personal side had broken its way past his own selfish concern. It stifled him and,

forcing his eyes from the man's brooding face, he got up and stumbled out of the room.

But he could not stay out. An indefinite dread dragged him back presently. An indefinite dread held him bound to his place during the examination of the witnesses who followed, during the days of argument, and the judge's inconclusive charge. He lay awake on the night following the jury's retirement, picturing over and over in his own mind the scene of their return — just what degree of astonishment his face should show in listening to their verdict, with just what proud reticence and conscious wrong he should make his way out from the crowd. He had never said that Whiting was guilty — he reminded himself of that. All he had ever said was that on one certain day, in one certain place — He rolled over on his face and, hands across his eyes, tried vainly to sleep.

Half of Sutro was loafing about the court-house lawn next morning, pushing its way into the corridors at every rumor, drifting back to the freer outer air. When at last the rumor proved a true one, Robbins found himself far in the back of the room, the wall behind him, on three sides a packed, jostling crowd. There was a blur of unintentional noise in the place — heavy breathing, the creaking of a door. Through the noise pierced at intervals the accustomed voice of the judge, and set between the intervals the mumble of the foreman's reply.

"— Agreed, all of you? —"

"Do you find the prisoner guilty or not guilty?"

The mumble dropped lower still. A stir swept over the front of the room, a wave of voiceless interest passing from front to back.

"What — what —!" Robbins stammered, straining higher on tiptoe.

"Guilty. Manslaughter," said the man beside him. He brought his hand down heavily on the boy's shoulder. "Suits you all right. Everybody knew —" The gavel sounded and he broke off, bending forward to listen.

But Robbins did not listen. It was as though the foundations of his world crumbled round him. That truth should fail, that innocent men should suffer — He fumbled at the sleeve of the man on the other side.

"I — did n't hear. They said —"

"Sh-h!" the man warned him, and then, behind his sheltering hand, "Guilty."

The judge's voice dropped, and the speaker began moving with others toward the door. Robbins moved, too — dazedly, uncertain what he did. Some one stopped him in the outer passage. He was conscious of congratulatory sentences. He heard his own voice speaking words which, seemingly, were not without meaning. And all the while the mind of him waited, awed, for the impending catastrophe.

Mercifully, the house was empty when he reached home. He tiptoed into his own room, and there, the door closed behind him, stood for a moment listening. Then, with an exclamation, he dropped to his knees beside the bed and buried his face against it.

For an hour he knelt there, bodily quiet, the mind of him beating, circling, thrusting desperately against its surrounding cage of falsehood. At first it was all fear — how the exposure would come, how best he might sustain himself against it. Then, imperceptibly, a deeper terror crept into his thinking. Suppose it should not come?

Suppose — But that was unthinkable. For a lie to blast a man's whole life, for a lie to brand him. Stealthily, as if his very stirring might incense the devil-god of such a world, he slid down, sitting beside the bed, his distended, horror-fascinated eyes hard on the wall. In those minutes his young faith in God and justice fought to the death with the injustice before him — fought and won.

"He 'll be sentenced Friday," he found himself thinking, drawing on some half-heard scrap of conversation. "That 's four days. There 's time enough —"

He dragged himself up and lay down at full length. Something hot smarted upon his face; he put up his hand to find his cheeks wet with tears. They flowed quietly for a long time — soothingly. He fell asleep at last, his lashes still heavy with them.

He was very early at the court-house Friday morning. Cartwright, coming in at nine to his office, crossed the corridor to speak to him — cheerily.

"Well, we got our man, Robbins. You made a good witness — I meant to tell you so before; no confusing you. Look here, my boy, you 're not fretting over this? If it had n't been you, it would have been some one else. There 's no covering a crime like that."

"Not — ever?" said Robbins thickly. His secret was upon his tongue's end. A glance of interrogation would have brought it spilling out. But there was no interrogation in his companion's eyes — only an abstracted kindness. He looked away from the lad toward the stragglers along the corridor.

"You came up to hear the sentence? Come in through my office and we 'll find you a seat. The place will be packed."

"There 's nothing new?" Robbins asked unwillingly. "No — new evidence?"

"Why, no! The case will be closed in another half-hour. And then I hope it will be a long time before you have any thing to do with a criminal charge again. Now if you want to come in —"

Robbins followed, silent. It did not trouble him to find himself placed conspicuously in the front row. His whole attention was set upon holding fast to the one strand of hope extended to him. In half an hour it would be over. In half an hour the hideous thing would be folded into the past. But it would *not!* The case against Whiting would be ended, the arraignment of God would be but just begun. To go on living in a world so guardianed —

The judge entered and took his place; the lawyers on either side filed in to their stations about the long table; the prisoner was brought in in the custody of a deputy sheriff. There was a little bustle of curiosity to herald his coming. Then the packed room settled to attention.

Robbins leaned forward in his seat. He heard vaguely the opening interchanges of speech. He saw the prisoner rise. The man was clay-colored; his teeth scraped back and forth continually on his dry lower lip. There was no resource in him, no help. And suddenly the watcher knew that help was nowhere. The voice of the judge reached him, low-pitched and solemn, as befitted the occasion.

"— having been found guilty — decree that you be confined —"

"*No!*" said Robbins suddenly almost in a scream.

All at once the thing was clear to him. It was not Whiting who was being sentenced, it was God who was on trial, it was truth, good faith, the right to hope. — The

impulse of his cry had wrenched him from his chair. He stood flung forward against the rail.

"You can't! I never saw him! They were tormenting me and I said I did. He was n't there —"

Behind him the court-room rang with excitement. He was aware of startled exclamations. He was aware of Cartwright, tragic-eyed, beside him, half-sheltering him, calling to him.

"Robbins! What 's wrong? He 's not speaking under oath. He 's been brooding —"

"It 's *so!*" said the boy.

For a moment he held himself erect among them, high-headed, joyous, splendid with the exaltation of the martyr. Then, suddenly, his eyes met the eyes of the prisoner. He dropped back into his seat, his shaking hands before his face.

It had lasted a second, less than a second, that frank, involuntary revelation; but in that second, his guard beaten down by sheer amazement, the prisoner's guilt stood plain in his face. In that second, reading the craven record of it, Robbins saw the glory of martyrdom snatched from him forever — knew himself, now and now only, irrevocably perjured.

THE BEST BAIT FOR MOSQUITOS[1]

By Henry Seidel Canby

Jaffray Brown was fishing the Dead Diamond, with results so far a little discouraging. It was a fascinating stream to fish. A flat, wild valley between two dark ranges was its bed, over which the amber water meandered lazily, now looping from slope to slope, now returning on its course in U's and S's upon the floor of the forest. At each sharp turn a little spit of white sand ran out from the alders, and beyond each spit, at the elbow of the curve, was a dark, still pool, in the shadows of which trout lurked, and flashed now and then at a white miller on the surface.

But only the little fellows rose to Jaffray's flies, and they took hold with such a doubtful grip that only three or four times the line had tightened at the strike, and a fish come swinging and plunging into the net. In between the sand-spits it was alder-swamp and cedar-tangle. Hot, sweaty, his face atickle with the brush of leaves, and smarting with their sting, he was pushing through irritably, jerking his rod, when the line caught, and kicking at the tussocks that wound about his feet, "Let go, you dirty

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parasite, you!" he hissed at a brier that snarled around his arm; and "Confound you," he snapped at a larch that prodded his chin. When he burst from the woods and slid panting on a sloping rock above the water, his nerves were all aquiver.

"I've got to calm down," he thought. "The doctor said 'no excitement,' and here I am as stirred up as if it were election day."

Plucking a few wisps of leaves from the reel, he examined his leader. The second fly had snapped off in the last encounter with the brush. He put on another ruefully.

"The trouble with me," he soliloquized, "is that I don't get the right wrist motion. Jim took twenty from this stretch yesterday. I guess what they say about my politics applies to my fishing. I don't know the game." His mind ran back to the fight for city betterment. "I might have known old Calkins would balk when it came to draining *his* marshes. What does he care if his workmen get the malaria! He thinks malaria is a gift of God."

A white moth eddied past his head, settled upon the noiseless current, was swirled into rough water below, and disappeared in a little curl of foam. "Any old bug catches them," he murmured, "except my flies." Stepping carefully behind the alders on the sand-spit, he peered through their branches down upon a pool full of black spruce shadows, and overhung by a steep and mossy bank. A frog sprang from the rushes beneath him, plumped into the pool, and swam manfully across its shadowed surface. A flash from the bottom, a rising shape, a broad and curving shoulder, and with an echoing splash he disappeared.

"A monster," Jaffray whispered tremulously, and cast

his flies across the dimpling surface. A flash, a tug! He struck at empty water. Again he cast, and let the hooks sink till the ripples died away. As he drew in the line, a shape followed it slowly, then whisked back into darkness.

"That ends it," said Jaffray, mournfully. "He 's too keen for me. A big, obvious bullfrog he swallows without looking; but when I play fair, and use a fly so as to give him a chance, I don't get even the opportunity of losing him. I wish I had some dynamite." He sat down beneath the alders and mopped his brows. "Now, if I 'd only let the ditching go to the city-hall crowd, they 'd have taken *that* bait. But principles, civic honesty, public good! They looked at them and went back home, like that trout."

Something was moving through the cedars of the farther bank. He heard soft footfalls and the creak of bending boughs. "A deer," he thought, and stepped behind the alder screen. A cedar at the pool end waved violently, and through the thick brush around it a gaitered foot came wriggling blindly, felt firm earth, and was followed by a khaki leg, a hunting-jacket, and a red and sweaty face. As the foot descended, another frog leaped from its impact, cut through the pool, and was swallowed in an even mightier splash. Face, body, and foot withdrew quickly into the herbage.

After an instant a hairy hand came pawing slowly through the leaves, hovered a moment, then descended with a sweep. In its fingers, as it rose, a frog sprawled limply. There was a tense pause; then out from above the cedars a light line swung the frog in a curve which ended over the black depths of the pool. A moment's

skittering on the surface, a swirl, a whip of the tautened ine, then the bushes burst, and the fisherman with bent rod and whining reel sprang knee-deep into the open water.

"You 've got him!" Jaffray yelled, and ran down on his sand-spit.

"I 've got him," the other said calmly, playing his fish up and down through the wavering shadows. Twice it made for the rapids below, and was snubbed; once it fought its way to the stumps and root arms of the overhanging banks; then it sulked till Jaffray dislodged it with a stone; and at last, rolling and feebly darting, came home to the net. "He 's safe," cried the fisherman.

Jaffray stepped upon a tussock to get a better view.

"Yes, he 's a beauty," he said a little coldly. "But —"

The fisherman smiled as he dropped the fish into his basket. "But you wish you 'd done the catching. Say, were n't you here first? I thought I heard somebody."

Jaffray blushed.

"I got him to rise, but I could n't hook him," he murmured. "I 'm using flies," he added politely.

His politeness was wasted.

"So would I, so would I," said the stranger, "if they 'd bite 'em. But that fellow wanted a frog, and I gave him one. Say, rub your hands around under that tussock and I 'll bet you 'll find a big fellow. Put your hook through his lips and let him sink about a foot. You 're sure to get a fish from that bit up ahead there. They are n't taking flies to-day."

Jaffray hesitated.

"I — I don't use bait for trout," he said with some embarrassment. "I like to get them on flies or not at all."

The hairy man on the other bank leaned his rod agains a cedar and sat down on a flat rock.

"Say, that 's interesting," he said. "What 's your idea I 've heard of fellows that feel that way about fishing, bu I never ran into one before. Have a cigar? I guess can throw it across. What you got against bait?"

Jaffray was painfully aware of the mere handful of trou in his creel. He caught the cigar, lit it, and sought refug in similes.

"Why, it 's like golf or any other game," he answered puffing. "A game 's got to have its rules in order to be game, has n't it? In golf you don't pick your ball out of hole, do you? You hit it out; that is, if you play fai And you don't take any muddy little worm or bug — o frog that comes along, and *feed* your trout; you tempt hi with something that is n't like his food, that he has to b cajoled into taking. That is," he ended somewha pedantically, "you make rules for your game, and then yo follow them."

The hairy man stretched out on his rock. "But loo here, mister, it 's trout you 're after, ain't it? Well, sup pose they don't want your flies; you lose your fish, don' you? Don't you, now?"

Jaffray grew heated.

"But I don't *want* my fish, if I can't catch him ac cording to the rules of the game." He waved his ciga toward the water. "Why not dynamite your old pool, an be done with it? That 's where *your* logic leads."

The man on the other side chuckled.

"I did once," he said reminiscently. "But I can't ru fast enough now for that. Just the same, if fish is what was after, I would n't let any rules stop *me* from gettin' 'em

Chey 're not *my* rules." He paused to let his words sink n. "I ain't been in politics for thirty years without earnin' that the way to get what you want is to get it."

"If it comes to that," Jaffray responded angrily, "you night as well say, if you 're a politician, 'Votes are what 'm after, and I 'll get them any way they can be got.'"

"Are you in politics?" the hairy man asked sharply.

Jaffray flushed.

"No-no, not in practical politics," he answered a little bitterly.

"Well, politics," his neighbor commented, "ain't so very different from fishing." He picked the big fish rom the basket and ran his fingers over its smooth skin aressingly. "Ain't he a beauty? But what I don't see s, why not give the fish what they *want*, instead of what rou think is good for 'em?" He glanced quizzically cross the shadowed water, and rolled his cigar from one ide of his mouth to the other.

"It 's overcoming difficulties that makes a game good port," said Jaffray, thoughtfully. "I have to choose my lies to suit varying conditions. I have to cast just right. have to strike as the fish rises. It 's better to catch a ish that way — when he 's had his chance — than to lug im in with a piece of meat. It 's better sport."

"*My* idea of sport is getting fish," said his opponent, loggedly.

Jaffray lost his temper.

"Nonsense!" he cried. "You could buy your fish for alf what it costs you to come here. It 's the game that rou come for, and playing fair and keeping to rules is vhat makes the game. If you can't see the moral side, t least you can see there 's more *fun* in my method. It 's

more fun to catch trout in a hard way than in an easy way, is n't it? And it 's the fun that you are after. You 're like" — he gesticulated for a comparison — "you 're like a fellow in my home town who has been in on every piece of graft as long as I can remember. Licked me last month, but that 's not why I 'm mentioning him. He 's got plenty of money. He 's in politics just for the fun of the thing. But what he gets is not fun, but more money. Now, if he were a real sport, he 'd fight on the other side."

The hairy man glanced at him keenly.

"Whad d' ye mean — 'other side'?" he asked. "I don't see the fun in gettin' licked."

Jaffray forgot about fishing.

"I 'll show you," he said expansively. "A crowd of us started in last year to clean up the marshes in our town. We got statistics to prove that if we could get rid of mosquitos, the city would save enough in increased value of real estate to pay the cost five times over. Well, things were coming our way. All we needed was a few more votes in the board of aldermen so as to be able to condemn a strip of marsh belonging to a tight-wad old manufacturer who would n't drain his lands. If we had won there, we would have gone after the railroad, which owns more marsh than all the rest put together, and got them, too — cleaned up the whole town, and increased the health rate ten per cent. Well, in steps Donergan. 'What do I get out of it?' he asks. 'A good town to live in,' the boys tell him. 'I said, what do *I* get out of it?' he answers and slaps his pockets.

"When I heard about it, I decided to ram the statistics into the aldermen's thick heads, and let Donergan go hang. Well, sir, before I got to the city hall, he had

bought every man jack of the doubtful ones — contracts, law business, coal orders, that sort of thing you know. The vote went dead against us, and that 's the end of the mosquito campaign."

"Licked you, did he?" the fisherman commented. "Well, mebbe *that* was what he wanted." He chuckled.

"It certainly was n't money he was after," Jaffray acknowledged. "But any way you look at it, he made a mistake."

"In fightin' you?"

"No," said Jaffray, "in spoiling the fight. If he had known real sport when he saw it, he would have come in with us."

The fisherman rose and picked up his rod. "Does your friend Donergan fish with bait?" he asked, yawning.

"No friend of mine," cried Jaffray, warmly. "I 've never seen him, though I know him by reputation well enough. But I 'll bet he does, and catches his meat in two minutes when he might have had an hour's fun trying to hook a trout. You 're like him."

"I guess I am," the hairy man remarked reflectively. "I guess I am, though I never thought of it that way before." He swung on his creel, and threw his cigar into the rapids. "But just the same, if the trout won't bite on flies, why even a 'real sport' has to use a frog, ain't he? Say, if you 'd only tried bait on them aldermen — the job of suing the railroad for instance!" Before Jaffray could answer, "Well, so long," he called, and pushed into the forest cover.

Jaffray disentangled his rod from the alders, and moved on in the opposite direction. The stream visibly curved to the right below the next rapids.

"He 's stirred up every pool for a quarter of a mile with his confounded bait. I 'll cut across the bend," he thought. "I wonder who the old chap is. Looks like a corporation president, talks like a policeman. Gad! I wish I 'd gotten that trout!"

Leaving the stream-side, he stepped back into the tangled jungle. Myriads of gnats rose from the soggy ground and tortured him. It was hot with the clinging heat of forest undergrowths. Raspberry-vines caught his ankles; birch-shoots whipped his face; and when he tried to drive head first through the network of branches, clammy spider-webs wreathed his forehead, and bark fragments worked down the back of his neck. After ten minutes' going, he sank upon a fallen tree, exhausted. But he set his jaw, and plunged again into the tangle. In the gloom ahead the river was gurgling. He made for it. The cedars gave place to balsam and firmer footing. He tiptoed over the needles, and, pulling aside a branch, saw a long, brown pool, foam flecked, lying in the dappled shadow. Half-way down beside a rock over which the amber current slid without rippling were three brown shapes.

A melancholy foreboding warned him that in the drowsy repose of mid-morning they would not take a fly. Nevertheless, he crawled noiselessly upstream above them, and drifted his line down the current. Three times his flies came upstream through the broken water. Never a rise. He put down his rod and crawled back through the balsams. The wise old trout lay there waiting, watching the flow of the current. Only a fin flicker now and then showed life. A white miller fluttered upon the current above them. They did not stir. A sodden pine-cone came bumping along the bottom. In a flash they were upon it;

hen swung back disgusted. "They want bait," said affray, sadly — "bait, meat!"

As he crawled back through the balsams he heard the ound of faintly rippling water not far away on his left. A tream must enter the river there. He saw in imagination a grassy estuary, and frogs, fat, green frogs, sitting ready o hand in the shallow water. Temptation smote him. How ridiculous to go hungry for a convention, a mere cruple! And yet a curious reluctance held him back from he stream and its frogs. "I *hate* compromise," he said ervously. "I said I 'd never use bait, and I won't, unless 'm starving."

He found his rod and cast again. The flies came back s unmolested as the spruce-needles that floated beside hem. His hunger increased. "Obstinacy," he murnured, "sheer obstinacy. I lost those aldermen; and ere I am again, losing my trout. All those fellows wanted vas the right kind of bait. Donergan gave it to them; I id n't. I might have got them if I 'd offered a chance to ght the railroad. I might have gotten Donergan. Vhy could n't I see that!" The river, the hidden trout, he frogs waiting in their pool, became symbolic of his truggle with politics. "Was I honest or was I obtinate?" With sudden clairvoyance he saw that there *vas* a question there. His brow wrinkled in thought. A hickadee scolded him from a spruce-branch unheard.

"The certain thing," he said aloud and bitterly, "is hat I lost — lost the fight, lost my chance to help the own. That seems to prove that the no-bait theory won't ork, does n't it? Let 's be practical for once," he murnured hastily. "Confound it! I 'm going to get a frog!"

The noise of running water grew louder as he worked his

way through the thicket. If a tributary, the stream was a large one. Perhaps there would be no frogs. He laughed at this possible ending of his moral crisis. Or perhaps, if there were frogs, the trout would not touch them. Suddenly he found himself at the edge of a murmurous pool as wide and deep as the one he had left behind him. Below he could see the pellucid curl of rapids. It was not a stream; it was a river. And the water was running the wrong way! The truth flashed upon him. He was at the neck of a horseshoe curve. This was his own river. And indeed, as he grasped his location, he saw and recognized a jagged quartz rock from which earlier that morning he had hooked a trout.

But a movement nearer caught his eye. It was a fine, fat frog stirring in the reeds. Kneeling, he crept softly to the water's edge and raised one grasping hand. But before it fell, something swished above his head, and a sudden wave of the bushes across the stream caught his eye.

A felt hat emerged from the alders, a hairy hand, a humid forehead. Jaffray, crouching rigid and helpless, stared at the apparition with horrid fascination. He tried to rise with dignity, but sank on one hand deeper into the mud.

"I thought I 'd try — some bait." He paused, stammering.

"Why, hello," said the hairy man. He also seemed embarrassed. "After a frog, are you? Well, it 's the way to catch 'em." He coughed and hesitated, then with a vicious twist jerked his line free from an overhanging balsam. A Parmacheenee Belle looped with two flies of darker hue dropped upon the dimpling water. "I 'm

tryin' flies." He laughed shamefacedly. "I — I ain't catchin' many, but, say, the fun *is* in tryin' to get 'em. Only, golwash it! I ain't got but one!"

His confession seemed to ease him.

"Say," he cried affably, "come across on the rocks up there and have some lunch with me. My name 's Donergan; yes, *Donergan!* I want to talk about the best bait for mosquitos. Get me? Well, come along. Mebbe you and I against the railroad can start somethin' yet."

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